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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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How Do You Ride This Thing?

NANCY PELOSI'S DIVIDED HOUSE

MICHAEL CROWLEY
THE EDITORS

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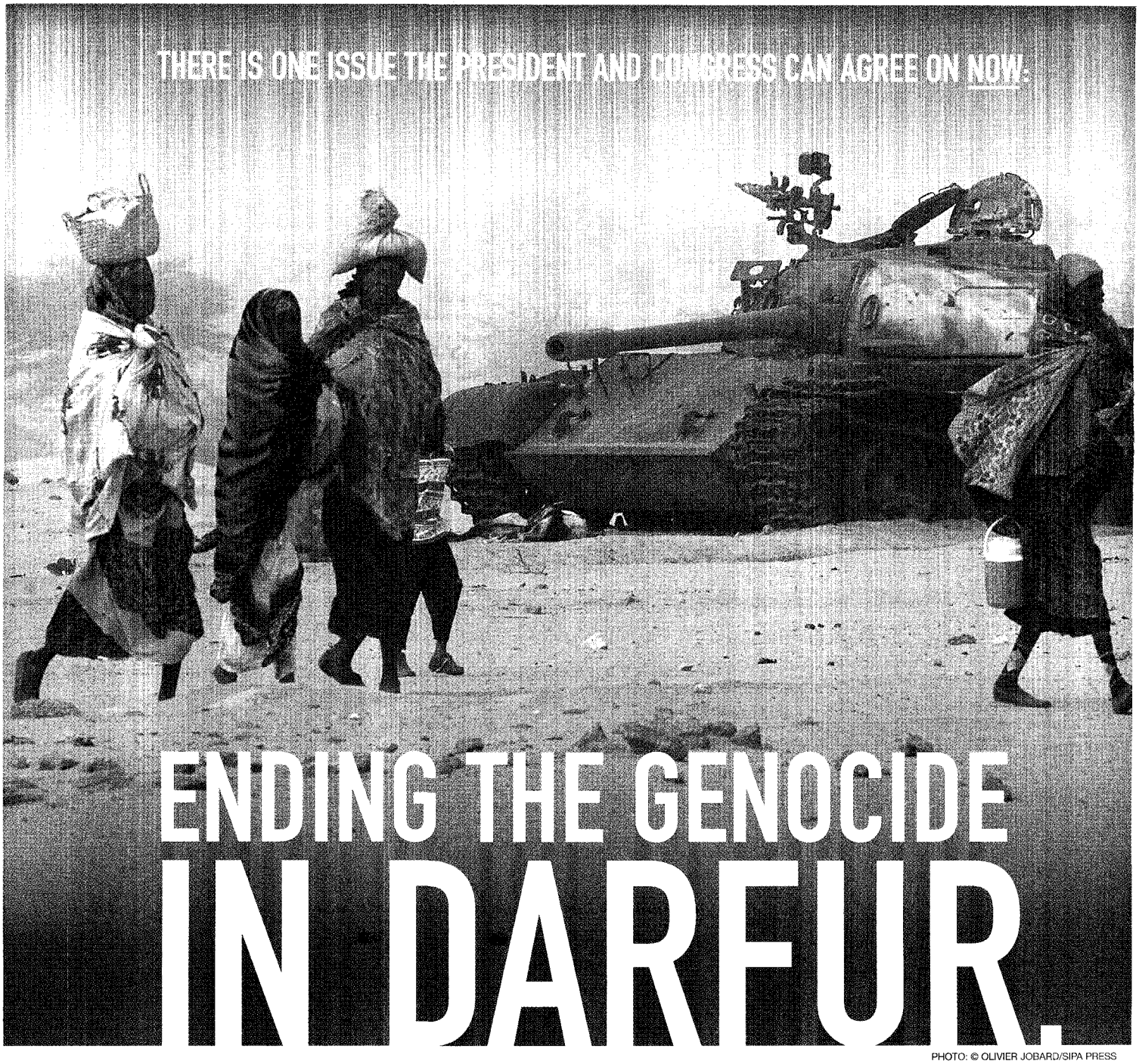

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President Bush and Congressional leaders must join together now to push for the immediate deployment of a strong, UN-led peacekeeping force to protect the people of Darfur and re-energize the peace process. In order to be effective, this force will need:

1. An explicit mandate to protect civilians.
2. Rules of engagement permitting the use of force to save lives.
3. A chain of command allowing necessary and timely military action without approval from distant political or civilian personnel.

This will not require American troops, but it will require America's help. The African Union, United Nations, and humanitarian aid community must have the resources to undertake this difficult mission to save Darfur – before it's too late.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND THE ARTS

DECEMBER 11, 2006 WASHINGTON, D.C. ISSUE 4,795 VOLUME 235

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CORRESPONDENCE

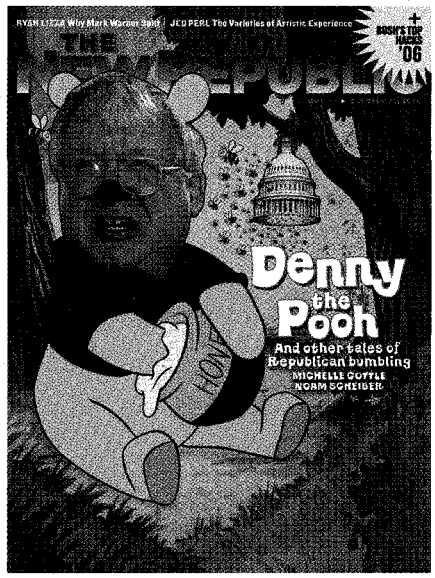
INACTION FACTION

IN ORDER TO END THE VIOLENCE IN Darfur, one has to understand the motivations behind that violence ("Optimism Gap," October 30). To classify that violence as simple "genocide" is not doing the full situation justice. Sudan is a perfect example of "uneven development." This development, in large part, has led to the societal rifts fueling the violence today. Over time, Darfur's crop exports have decreased, and desertification has encroached upon much of the existing cropland. Due to this, a majority of Sudanese citizens in Darfur have become increasingly poor. Those with wealth and power in the government are doing their best to maintain dominance and quell outrage over the rampant inequality. The government has enlisted the help of a Muslim militia group, the *Janjaweed*, to aid in quieting rebellion. This alone should lessen any possible arguments that what is taking place is genocide. There is no argument that the conflict is not violent or that it doesn't need to end. But part of the original definition of genocide, created after World War II, stipulates that "intent" is necessary for such a classification. The government's intent is not to destroy a group of people, but to maintain power, which does not qualify as genocide.

BLAKE TYRA
Lexington, Kentucky

YOUR EDITORIAL MAKES IMPORTANT, valid points. But the tangential reference to Anthony Lake as "one of the architects of U.S. inaction in the Balkans" is not correct. The contrary is true. In 1993 and 1994, opposition to an activist U.S. role to stop the genocide in Bosnia came from other sources in the administration, as well as from the Europeans. Lake, as national security adviser, favored an activist role. In 1995, he was the architect of the end-game strategy that led to an end to the killings in Bosnia, to the Dayton Accords, and to the establishment of an independent Bosnian state.

RICHARD SCHIFTER
Counselor, National Security Council, 1993–1997
Bethesda, Maryland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THE EDITORS RESPOND:
The politics of Darfur are complex. Too often, this complexity has been a crutch for those who argue that the killing and destruction still unfolding in western Sudan does not constitute genocide or does not merit Western intervention. They point out that Darfur's rebels are not exactly blameless: After all, they note, it was those rebels—not Sudan's leaders—who ignited the conflict nearly four years ago, and many refused to sign an internationally mediated peace accord last spring. All true. But nowhere is it written that complex conflicts cannot also be genocidal ones. Indeed, it is those who refuse to call the Darfur conflict genocide who seem incapable of dealing with complexity. They cite historical and political factors, as if the mere existence of history and politics in this remote corner of Africa disproves the charge of genocide—as if genocide cannot be committed by those who have complicated political motivations or against those who belong to groups represented on the political stage by unsavory actors. But this is nonsense. That Darfuri rebel groups have committed atrocities does not prove Sudan's government innocent of committing genocide. That Darfur's non-Arab tribes desire a greater share of national power and wealth does not change the fact that they are victims of terrible crimes. That the Darfur crisis is partially the result of morally neutral environmental factors does not refute the charge that it is also the result of man-made evil. Blake Tyra's argument is riddled with this illogic. Unfortunately, he isn't alone. Certain commentators seem to take special delight in explaining just how complex the Darfur conflict is. Sudan's leaders are merely trying to hold the country together, they argue. So what? The means Sudan's leaders have chosen to hold their country together—defeating the Darfur insurgency by altering the region's demography—are genocidal, and that is the only thing that matters. International law on genocide does not recognize a complexity defense: If leaders order violence with "intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," it doesn't matter whether their motivations for doing so are geopolitically complex. Nor does it matter if the groups they target have complicated ambitions and motivations of their own. Genocide is still genocide. And inaction is still shameful.

For his part, Richard Schifter raises a fair point about Anthony Lake. But, even if Lake was among the more activist members of the Clinton team on Bosnia, he still presided as national security adviser over a disastrous period of U.S. inaction in the Balkans.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC (ISSN 0028-6583), Vol. 235, Number 24, Issue 4,795, December 11, 2006. (Printed in the United States on November 30, 2006.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated March 20 & 27, June 5 & 12, July 10 & 17, August 14 & 21, September 11 & 18, and November 27 & December 4, 2006) at 1331 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone (202) 508-4444. For advertising inquiries, please contact Jillian Wheat at (202) 508-4444. Yearly subscriptions, $79.97; foreign, $119.97 (U.S. funds); Canada, $99.97 (U.S. funds). Back issues, $6.00 domestic and $10.00 foreign/Canada (includes postage & handling). © 2006 by The New Republic, LLC. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Rights and permissions: fax (202) 628-9383. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. For hard copy reprints, call (202) 508-4444. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, and CD-ROM are available through ProQuest, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone (800) 521-0600. Postmaster: Send changes of address to The New Republic, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (e-mail address: letters@tnr.com). For subscription inquiries or problems call **(800) 827-1289** or visit our website at www.thenewrepublic.com.

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Blue Crush

TRB
FROM WASHINGTON

IN THE WORLD TODAY, THERE ARE three models for how to save a country on the brink. The first is Iraq, where the United States—largely alone—is trying to prevent a dictatorship from sliding into chaos. The second is Afghanistan, where the United States is doing much the same thing with NATO support.

The third is almost invisible to Americans. It is the Congo, where the largest U.N. peacekeeping operation in the world is struggling to rescue one of the most wretched countries on earth. And it is doing so with virtually no high-level involvement by the United States.

The Congo makes Iraq and Afghanistan look prosperous. Seventy-five percent of the population is malnourished; 20 percent of children die before age five. In the 1950s, life expectancy was 55; today, it is 51.

During the cold war, when the West propped up anti-communist megalomaniac Mobutu Sese Seko—for whom the term "kleptocrat" was coined—many assumed that conditions in the Congo could not possibly get worse. They were wrong. In 1996, Rwanda and Uganda—angry at Mobutu for sheltering the Hutu militias that carried out the Rwandan genocide—helped replace him with rebel leader Laurent Kabila. But, as *The Economist*'s Kinshasa correspondent has noted, Kabila proved "equally brutal and corrupt, but less intelligent." While drunk, he sometimes ordered people executed, only to forget he had done so after sobering up.

In 1998, Kabila fell out with his Ugandan and Rwandan patrons, who sponsored a rebellion that nearly removed him from power. But Kabila turned to Angola and Zimbabwe, which saved his government in return for carte blanche to plunder its wealth. Soon, the Congo was a vast carcass, picked at by nine of its neighbors and countless local militias. In the civil war that raged until 2003, almost four million Congolese died—the largest death toll since World War II.

Finally, after Laurent Kabila was assassinated and his son Joseph Kabila assumed power, most of the parties reached a peace deal, which the United Nations was brought in to enforce. At first, it did nothing of the sort. Peacekeepers watched as violence continued to ravage eastern portions of the country. One Congolese observer wondered if the blue helmets were "here to do anything apart from count the bodies."

But, a couple of years ago, the peacekeeping mission began stirring to life. It gained a savvy new head, replaced a hapless contingent of Uruguayans with more numerous—and more experienced—Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis, and moved aggressively into the Congo's lawless east. The European Union sent 2,000 of its own soldiers to help secure Kinshasa.

In 2006, in perhaps the greatest logistical accomplishment in electoral history, the Congo held its first free election in 40 years. In a country as big as western Europe, with only 500 kilometers of paved roads, the U.N. spearheaded an effort that registered 25 million people and established 50,000 polling places. The election was moderately fair, and turnout topped 80 percent. This week, after a second-round runoff, the Congolese Supreme Court certified Kabila as the winner.

Only a fool would be sanguine about the Congo's future. Kabila, while better than his father, is hardly a democrat. His main rival, Jean-Pierre Bemba—who wields his own private security force—could still violently contest the result. The election revealed a country split along tribal and linguistic lines. And the Congolese state isn't merely corrupt and brutal; as a provider of basic services, it barely exists.

But, nonetheless, the Congo hasn't been this hopeful since the 1960s. And the credit goes to an intriguing coalition of European money, African diplomacy, South Asian muscle, and U.N. expertise. Although U.N. formulas require the United States and Japan to foot a significant share of any peacekeeping bill, it was mostly the Europeans who financed the elections. South Africa and Angola pressured Kabila and Bemba to respect the results. South Asian troops kept the peace.

As the United States grows allergic to nation-building in the wake of Iraq, some combination of these forces might be the world's best hope for nursing broken nations back to health. While Europeans are more reluctant to wage war than Americans, they are often more inclined to help keep the peace. In fact, the European Union is developing a 60,000-person rapid-reaction force largely for that purpose. South Asia has become the world's largest source of peacekeepers, and the numbers could grow as India flexes its international muscle.

Then there's the United Nations itself—which, while often mocked in the United States (sometimes deservedly), has become the foremost repository of peacekeeping expertise in the world. As RAND's James Dobbins has pointed out, both the United States and the United Nations did a lot of postwar stabilization in the '90s. But, while the Bush administration essentially discarded that knowledge and started from scratch in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United Nations now has a cadre of officials with extensive nation-building experience. Of course, Turtle Bay can't overthrow governments. But, when it comes to ushering post-conflict societies toward democracy and peace, as Dobbins notes, the United Nations actually has a better record than the United States.

Looking at the post-Iraq world, two realities jump out. In the United States, nation-building will be a dirty word. And, across the globe, nation-building will remain desperately necessary. As Oxford University's Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler have shown, peacekeeping is the most cost-effective way to prevent a country from sliding back into chaos. Indeed, the rise of international peacekeeping deserves significant credit for the decline in civilian deaths since the end of the cold war.

If the United States no longer has much appetite for such endeavors, we should at least support those who do. Largely as a result of the Congo, U.N. peacekeeping costs have shot up, and it is easy to imagine the United States trying to rein them in. We should do exactly the reverse. To consolidate its fledgling democracy, the Congo actually needs more blue helmets—and we should help pay for them. The United States goes through missionary phases and anti-missionary phases, but, in the end, this isn't really about us. The important thing isn't who saves countries like the Congo; it is that they get saved. **PETER BEINART**

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Reform Party

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES may not always fulfill its claim to be the "people's body," but it's a fine specimen of human nature. Each time a new coterie of politicians arrives, earnestly carrying the banner of reform, it soon finds itself succumbing to the grubbier seductions of the place. Among the K Street corporate mouthpieces, you'll find plenty of erstwhile Watergate Babies and Republican Revolutionaries. And it's not just idealists who fall. Every time a political party indulges the temptations that accompany majority power, the electorate predictably boots it back to the perk-impoverished minority.

Democrats are well-aware of the price of abandoned reform. When Bill Clinton arrived in 1992, it was on a platform of "stopping the revolving door . . . , limiting special interests, and reforming campaign finance." But, during his first two years, Tom Foley and Dick Gephardt snuffed these proposals. Foley also tried to deflect attention from the Democrats' illicit use of the House Post Office and Bank. Then came November 1994, and you know how that story goes.

A large chunk of the new Democratic House leadership lived through this tumble. It is a mystery, therefore, why they would project the image they have this last month. After House Speaker–elect Nancy Pelosi campaigned on ethics, she tried to install Jack Murtha—who eloquently described political reform as "total crap"—as majority leader. Then she flirted with anointing the impeached federal judge Alcee Hastings chairman of the Intelligence Committee.

To the Democrats' great credit, they passed over Murtha and pressed Pelosi to forgo Hastings. And, hopefully, these early bruises will have drummed in a lesson: The House is riddled with parochial interests and gigantic egos—all conspiring to buck reform. To preserve the new majority, Democrats will have to forget institutional interests and, in an important sense, crush them.

When Congress returns in January, it will take up reforms backed by Pelosi. These will include banning gifts and travel paid by lobbyists, forcing lobbyists to fully disclose their activities, and requiring members to identify some "earmarked" provisions in budget proposals. But these worthy measures hardly address the root causes of House corruption. They are palliatives, not cures.

Any truly serious reform would begin by lessening the opacity of the legislative process. Under current rules, House and Senate members from the Appropriations Committees can insert obscurely worded measures in the federal budget without debate—indeed, without other members even aware of them. These "earmarks" then become part of the final conference report that the House and Senate votes up or down.

Pelosi's proposal would require that members disclose when an earmark they insert is designed to benefit their home district or state. But the bulk of the earmarks at the center of recent scandals were aimed at companies and groups that had no particular connection to the legislators' home base; in return, members received campaign contributions, favors, and gifts. Pelosi's proposal would, in effect, expose the most benign aspect of earmarks—a research grant, say, to the local university—but exempt the most malignant.

Another cause of corruption is Congress's failure to police itself. The House Ethics Committee gave a pass to Jack Abramoff and his clients. Dennis Hastert tried to block the Ethics Committee from investigating former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. And, when Democrats controlled Congress, they tried to protect their own. What's needed, as Barack Obama has proposed, is an independent ethics commission with broad investigative power. But many top Democrats have resisted the idea.

Then there's the persistent perniciousness of the campaign finance system, which enables lobbyists to exchange contributions for legislative favors. The only way to solve this is by replacing private money with public money. Earlier this year, Representatives Barney Frank and David Obey introduced a proposal for public financing of congressional campaigns. But Pelosi hasn't included any campaign finance reforms in her package.

Of course, an ambitious program like this raises all sorts of tricky logistical questions. And it's hard to blame Pelosi for wanting to steer clear of them on her maiden voyage. But there is no excuse for the failure to crack down hard on earmarks or the failure to establish an independent ethics commission. There are eerie echoes of Foley and Gephardt in these early decisions. But, as the pre-Gingrich Democrats can attest, life in the majority with fewer perks beats the alternative. ■

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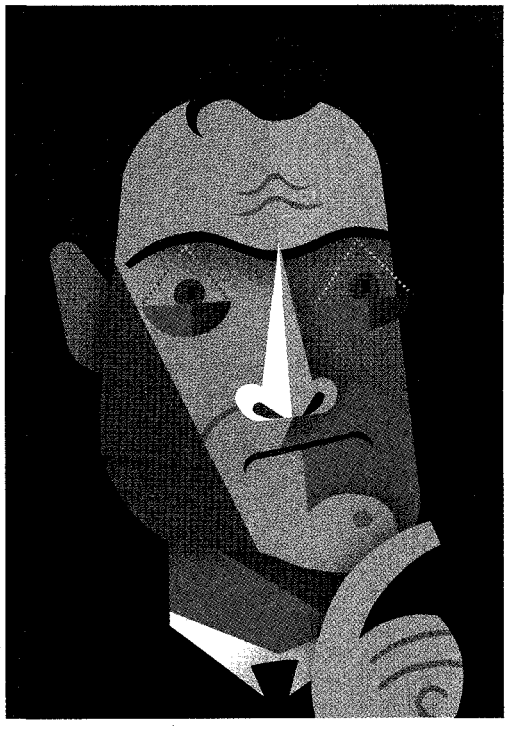
John Roberts, centrist?

Partial Solution

BY JEFFREY ROSEN

As always, Democratic candidates in the last election warned that conservative Supreme Court justices would threaten abortion rights. So it was especially appropriate that, as Democrats were celebrating their victory on the morning of November 8, the Court was hearing oral arguments in two cases that many liberals fear could signal the beginning of the end for *Roe* v. *Wade*. The cases, which concern the federal ban on partial-birth abortion, are similar to a case the Court decided in 2000 involving the constitutionality of partial-birth abortion bans in 29 states. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor provided a tie-breaking vote for the liberal side in that ruling. Now that she has been replaced by Justice Samuel Alito, pro-choicers worry that the Court may finally get serious about undoing *Roe*.



But the long-predicted Supreme Court *Götterdämmerung* may not come to pass. Last spring, as he approached the end of his first term on the bench, Chief Justice John Roberts declared that his goal was to promote unanimity and collegiality on the Court, encouraging his colleagues to decide cases as narrowly as possible so that liberal and conservative justices could converge on common results. During oral arguments in the partial-birth abortion cases this month, Roberts searched openly for a moderate solution that would uphold the partial-birth abortion ban while construing it narrowly to avoid the result pro-lifers most hope for and pro-choicers most fear. If Roberts can persuade his colleagues to embrace this compromise, he would disappoint liberal and conservative extremists. But the country as a whole could breathe a sigh of relief.

Pro-choice activists have long complained that the partial-birth abortion controversy is a wedge issue, exploited by pro-lifers to put them on the defensive. And they're right: While two-thirds of Americans support the right to choose abortion early in pregnancy, nearly the same percentage favor a ban on partial-birth abortions, which usually take place later in pregnancy. In this sense, the Supreme Court did the pro-choice side no political favors when it struck down the state bans on partial-birth abortion in 2000. Congressional Republicans, attempting to milk the issue for all it was worth, passed a federal ban on partial-birth abortions but refused to include an exception for cases where the woman's health was threatened, which the Court had stressed was constitutionally necessary. Congress also defined partial-birth abortion so broadly that the ban might be construed to cover the most common form of legal abortions performed in the second trimester of pregnancy, known as dilation and evacuation, or D&E. (In this procedure, which accounts for 95 percent of second-trimester abortions, the fetus is terminated inside the womb.)

In his questions on November 8, Roberts seemed especially interested in the possibility that the Court could dodge the hard constitutional issues in the following way: It could draft an order that would prevent the federal abortion law from being applied to D&E abortions, limiting it instead to partial-birth abortions. The narrowest definition of partial-birth abortion is known as dilation and extraction, or D&X. In D&X, the live fetus is extracted through the cervix feet-first up to the head, its skull is crushed, and it is then delivered intact—a gruesome procedure that bears a strong resemblance to infanticide, since the fetus is killed while most of it is outside the womb. Only a small percentage of the 1.3 million abortions performed annually in the United States are D&E procedures, but a much smaller fraction—numbering no more than several thousand—are D&X. The problem is that Congress didn't limit the federal ban to D&X abortions: It forbade any abortions in which the abortion provider "deliberately and intentionally vaginally delivers a living fetus until, in the case of a head-first presentation, the entire fetal head is outside the body of the mother, or, in the case of breech presentation, any part of the fetal trunk past the navel is outside the body of the mother, for the purpose of performing an overt act that the person knows will kill the partially delivered living fetus."

At the oral arguments on November 8, the two lawyers for the pro-choice groups insisted that the federal definition might cover D&E abortions that inadvertently turn into D&X abortions—for example, cases where the abortion provider means to dismember the fetus inside the womb but pulls it halfway out in an effort to keep it as intact as

David Cowles

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possible and finds it is still alive. But Roberts resisted that claim, emphasizing that "sometimes the D&E procedure will lead to a D&X procedure, but ... the requirement of 'deliberately and intentionally' removes those situations from the scope of the statute." Since doctors always know several days before the procedure whether they are trying to perform a D&E or D&X abortion, Roberts suggested, the relevant intention could be measured at the beginning of the operation, sparing doctors who start off trying to perform D&E procedures from being punished when those procedures take an unexpected turn. By making clear that abortions that begin as D&E procedures are exempt from the federal ban, the Court would answer pro-choice fears that the partial-birth law is the beginning of a slippery slope that could lead to the ban of most second-trimester abortions, thereby eviscerating the core of *Roe*.

Even if Roberts convinced the Court to construe the federal partial-birth abortion law to exempt D&E abortions, there still would be another problem: The ban contains no exception for cases where a partial-birth abortion is necessary to preserve the life and health of the mother, which the Court has said is constitutionally required. There is a dispute about the relative safety of the D&E and D&X procedures: A peer-reviewed study of abortions performed over 20 weeks at Weill-Cornell Medical Center found that doctors used D&E in 69 percent of cases and D&X in 31 percent of cases and that both procedures were comparably safe. Meanwhile, Congress and two district courts found that there was no situation where the D&X procedure was medically necessary or had marginal safety benefits. But one district court found that D&X was safer in cases involving preeclampsia combined with maternal cancer and placenta previa, and some doctors believe it is safer in other cases as well. The Court could finesse this dispute with another judicial sleight of hand, by simply creating a health exception—in other words, construing the ban not to apply in cases when a partial-birth abortion is necessary to preserve the mother's health.

The Court still would have to resolve another hard question, though: Who decides if and when partial-birth abortions are medically necessary—should it be individual doctors, lower-court judges, or the medical profession as a whole? In the oral argument, there was a dramatic gap between the liberal and conservative justices about how broadly to create a health exception. Roberts suggested that a marginal increase in safety wasn't enough to override Congress's interest in preventing D&X abortions as long as the D&E procedure was nearly as safe in most cases. Justice Stephen Breyer, by contrast, wondered aloud whether the Court might allow D&X abortions "only where appropriate medical opinion finds it necessary for the safety or health of the mother." And, in 2000, Breyer wrote for the Court emphasizing that D&X abortions had to be allowed as long as a "significant body of medical opinion" believed they might be safer for some patients. The Court had previously said the abortion itself had to be necessary for the woman's physical or psychological health; Breyer expanded this to say that, if a woman chose an abortion, she was entitled to the safest one in all circumstances.

If Breyer applies the same lax standard in this case, he risks calling into question his hard-earned reputation as the justice most deferential to Congress—since a minority of doctors believe that the D&X procedure is always safer than D&E. Between 1994 and 2000, Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg voted to strike down fewer federal laws than any other justice; and, in his recent book, *Active Liberty*, Breyer argues that judges should show restraint and modesty in the face of national disagreement, deferring to the decisions of elected representatives—especially those in Congress—in order to promote democratic deliberation. There was something unseemly about Breyer's announcement that he had asked his law clerks to tally up the numbers of medical experts who testified for and against the partial-birth ban at every stage in the case. He seemed to be allowing his progressive weakness for the rule of experts to trump his devotion to judicial deference to Congress. By allowing the federal ban to be enjoined only for specific categories of medical conditions in which substantial numbers of doctors believe that D&X abortions are safer than D&E abortions, Breyer could preserve his record as a principled defender of judicial restraint.

Breyer is not the only justice who runs the risk of betraying his principles. If Justice Clarence Thomas decides to uphold the partial-birth abortion ban, abandoning his usual skepticism of federal regulations, he, too, would look opportunistic. By the same token, conservative defenders of the ban, such as former Attorney General Edwin Meese, are urging the Court to construe Congress's power to regulate interstate commerce very broadly, even though they take the opposite position in cases involving civil rights and environmental regulations; liberal groups are similarly hypocritical.

CAN ROBERTS STOP the Court from dividing along party lines? Yes, if he can persuade his colleagues to uphold the partial-birth law while preventing it from being applied to D&E abortions or in any situation in which a D&X abortion is medically necessary. (Even the Bush administration conceded in its briefs that this would be a diplomatic way for the Court to avoid the hard constitutional questions, although it prefers a ruling that would interpret the law in a less compromising fashion.) A narrow decision along these lines would give an important symbolic victory to pro-lifers while answering the main policy concerns of pro-choicers. And, by refusing to overturn the 2000 partial-birth abortion decision, it would express the respect for previous judicial precedents that Roberts embraced in his confirmation hearings.

Roberts's hero, Chief Justice John Marshall, convinced a group of unruly colleagues to converge around narrow, unanimous opinions that appeared to give a victory to one side while also acknowledging the claims of its bitter oppo-

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nents. If Roberts follows Marshall's example and finds a deft compromise in the abortion wars, he will deserve the thanks of a grateful nation. And, if he fails, his vision of a Court that governs best when it governs most narrowly will be off to a bumpy start. ■

Beirut Dispatch

Militias' Intent

BY ANNIA CIEZADLO

THERE WAS A time in Lebanon when guys like Bashir Asfour called the shots. A strapping, tattooed, 22-year-old Maronite Christian, Asfour stood in downtown Beirut last Thursday waving a black flag emblazoned with a leering skull, a sword, and a hand grenade—a memento from the Lebanese civil war, when commandos would prowl the streets of Beirut, setting up impromptu checkpoints and slaughtering young men from rival militias. Asfour had brought the flag out for the funeral of Lebanon's latest assassination victim—Pierre Gemayel, a young Maronite Cabinet minister from the Phalange Party, gunned down, mafia-style, in the streets of Beirut.

"We're going to Baabda to unseat the president!" shouts Asfour, waving his fist in the air. The presidential palace at Baabda is occupied by pro-Syrian politician Émile Lahoud, whose term in office was forcibly extended by Damascus two years ago. "*Inshallah bekhair*," his friend Roger Janah adds quickly, which roughly translates to, "God willing, it will be good." In Lebanon, it's what you say when you suspect that God may not, in fact, be willing.

What happens next—or, rather, what doesn't happen—says a lot about the current state of Lebanese politics: Asfour and Janah don't go to Lahoud's palace. No one does. Instead, funeral organizers order the demonstrators to go home, which is exactly what they do.

Lebanon is locked in a battle over its political future, and it's clear which faction has the upper hand and which is demoralized. On one side is a powerful alliance of Shia and Christians, including the Shia militia Hezbollah, backed by Syria and Iran. On the other is the fragile government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora—representing Sunnis, Christians, and Druze—backed by the United States and Saudi Arabia. Emboldened by this summer's war with Israel, Hezbollah is demanding a bigger share of Lebanon's Cabinet posts, which would effectively hand it control of the government. Disheartened by rumors out of Washington that the Baker Commission will recommend détente with Damascus to fix Iraq and by Hezbollah's swelling postwar prestige, anti-Syrian partisans like Asfour are divided, defensive, and terrified of being sold out by their protector—the United States. Which is why, despite their bluster, Asfour and his fellow protesters don't march to Baabda in the end. They may talk tough, but these guys know who's calling the shots in Lebanon these days, and it isn't them.

Annia Ciezadlo is a Beirut-based writer.

AT THE CONDOLENCES for Gemayel, I stand in line with my friend Eliane, from the Maronite stronghold of Bikfaya. Our taxi driver, John, had gallantly offered to accompany us, but, after a few minutes in the sea of glowering, black-leather-jacketed men, he starts shaking and begs to go wait in the car. "I think he's with Aoun," hisses Eliane after he leaves. She's referring to General Michel Aoun, a Maronite politician who has split from the anti-Syrian coalition and formed an alliance with Hezbollah. "I hate Aoun," she says. "He divided the Christians." Later, John confides that he hates Aoun, too; he likes Samir Geagea, another Maronite warlord. During the 1975–1990 civil war, Geagea teamed up with Gemayel's uncle, Bashir, to butcher the Maronite leader Tony Franjieh before forming his own rival militia—thus further dividing Lebanon's already considerably divided Christians.

Today, the alliances shift as dizzyingly and expediently as they did back then. That, along with the recent war, explains how Syria has gone—in less than two years—from being chased out of Lebanon in humiliating fashion to a new position of strength in Lebanese politics. Consider the trajectory of Aoun: In 1989, the general defied Syria and declared himself president. Syria was a U.S. ally back then, so, when Aoun refused to resign, Syrian President Hafez Assad and the United States joined forces against him. Syria bombed him out of Baabda, Secretary of State James Baker sued to kick his ambassadors out of the Lebanese embassy in Washington, and Aoun fled the country in 1991. For the next 14 years, Aoun's followers, mostly young Maronites, fought Syrian hegemony in Lebanon. When an explosion killed former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in the spring of 2005, Lebanon's postwar generation staged an uprising against the 29-year Syrian occupation. Hundreds of thousands of people, including young Aounists, turned out for peaceful protests that toppled the pro-Syrian prime minister and ultimately led Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon. A few months later, elections gave the anti-Syrian opposition a parliamentary majority, making it the ruling coalition. With Christians and Sunnis united, and only the Shia against them, the anti-Syrian movement seemed ascendant.

But, when the other members of the anti-Syrian coalition cut Aoun out of their election plans, he started aligning himself with pro-Syrian power brokers—including Hezbollah. "Michel Aoun was a symbol of the fight against the Syrians at one point in time," says Serge Abou Halaka, a cousin of Pierre Gemayel and a onetime Aoun admirer. "No one believes how this guy has turned around 180 degrees and is now a close ally of the Syrians." Without Aoun, who still

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commands a large following among Christians, the anti-Syrian forces have lost a chunk of their street base—hurting their ability to turn out demonstrators, which is how Lebanese factions signal political strength. On November 19, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah threatened to call out massive street protests to prove his side's numerical superiority. When Gemayel was killed two days later, the Siniora government joined the numbers war, pledging a mega-demonstration of its own.

Depending on which side you believe, the turnout at Gemayel's funeral ranged from 10,000 to one million. But, by all accounts, the crowds were much smaller than the massive protests during last year's anti-Syrian uprising. Protesters burned pictures of Lahoud and carried signs asking a pointed question of Aoun: ARE YOU HERE OR THERE? Meant as an accusation, it seemed almost like a plea.

IN THE GANG war of Lebanese politics, the key to survival is figuring out who is about to betray you—and then betraying him first. And so the anti-Syrian forces have been eyeing the United States uneasily as of late. It's no secret that the United States is looking for a way out of Iraq; Syria, with its deep ties to the Sunni insurgency, might be willing to help—for a price. "People are worried," says Lebanese legal scholar Chibli Mallat, "because the price that Syria wants to extract is precisely Lebanon."

Mallat doesn't think the United States will sacrifice his country. But others aren't so sure, especially with the Iraq Study Group headed by Baker—the architect of Syrian hegemony over Lebanon. After the midterm elections, U.S. public opinion seems clear: fragile nation-building projects, out; cold-eyed realpolitik, in. And Syria could help the United States in the wider war on terrorism while serving as an invaluable counterweight to Iran. "Syria has the upper hand, not just in Lebanon, but regionally," says Nadim Shehadi, a fellow at Chatham House, a London-based think tank. "Syria has a very strong position in relation to all the conflicts in the region that concern the United States."

When Hariri was killed, the Lebanese looked to the United States for protection from Syria. After the recent war, however, U.S. protection lost considerable luster. As Israel pounded Lebanon with U.S.-made bombs, and the Bush administration initially resisted a U.N. cease-fire proposal, the fragile U.S.-backed government looked increasingly impotent. "After this summer, you cannot argue with Hezbollah. ... So that's why Hezbollah is very openly laying down its agenda," says Shehadi.

Lebanon's anti-Syrian forces—especially its Christians—are painfully aware that Hezbollah is armed and that they are not. And pro-Syrian forces, including Aoun and his followers, are beginning to think they may have picked the right horse after all. "They think the Iranians are winning and the United States is stepping back in Iraq," says Halaka. "With the new situation in the U.S.—with Bush losing in the Congress and Senate—they think, 'They're losing and we're winning.'" And maybe they're right. ■

Damascus rising.

Syriana

BY MARTIN PERETZ

YES, I ADMIT IT. This is a theme I've been harping on for almost a quarter of a century: Syria sees Lebanon as an illegitimate breakaway from a great empire ruled from and by Damascus. Parts of Iraq and Turkey, and Cyprus in its entirety, are also duchies in this imagined imperium. And, of course, Israel. In the struggle against the Jewish restoration, many Arabs of Palestine called themselves southern Syrians. That provided a rationale for Damascus to fight in every Arab war against the Jews.

Lebanon itself is a contrivance of the French, hewn from the disintegrated Ottoman Empire. Composed of Christians (Maronite Catholics and Greek Orthodox), Sunnis, Shia, and Druze, the country has an intricate sectarian formula for political representation based on a census conducted three-quarters of a century ago. But, off and on, Lebanon has functioned as a tolerably free society, mercantile rather than productive (tourism, banking, cannabis). Since Lebanon has been the weakest Arab state, it has held the distinction of hosting the most Palestinian "refugees." The Palestinians cannot become citizens, and they cannot legally work without a permit, which is hard to get. By now, almost no one in Lebanon cares a fig for the Palestinians.

During the late '70s and early '80s, however, Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) succeeded in establishing a functioning mini-state in southern Lebanon, harassing Israel across the border and ruling the local Shia with a very heavy hand. In 1982, Israel freed itself and southern Lebanon from the onerous dictatorship of its neighbor's Palestinian guests. The PLO was shipped off to Tunis, and the defeated ordinary Palestinians in Lebanon kept on dreaming of their fantasy orange orchards in what was once sand and is now metropolitan Tel Aviv.

But, while all of this was going on, there was an actual civil war being fought with car bombs and militias among the sects in shifting and unstable alliances. It is hard to reconstruct the battle zones of memory. First at the behest of Christian warlords, and then to "protect" the Palestinians (in any case, at least half a decade before the Israeli Defense Forces invaded in 1982), the Syrians arrived to restake their operational claim over Lebanon. Of course, Damascus switched sides as many times as the seasons changed, backing this faction and then another. Even the Maronites, who, with some bourgeois Sunnis, are what is left of authentic Lebanese nationalism, still have figures and followers among them aligned with Bashar Assad's regime: the spineless President Émile Lahoud, for example, and General

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Michel Aoun, who sometimes puts the title "Marshal" in front of his moniker, *la grandeur* and all that. The Syrians had developed a near-certain method for keeping politicians in line: assassinate enough of them so that others won't think for a moment of being independent.

This only works up to a point. Over 21 months, Assad successfully targeted at least five politicians and undisciplined journalists, including Rafik Hariri, an idolized zillionaire and former prime minister of the country. Then, a fortnight ago, the Syrians murdered Pierre Gemayel, a minister in the Lebanese cabinet and the son of a former president whose brother, Bashir Gemayel, another president, was also murdered by the Syrians after he had tried to make peace with Israel in 1982. Political parties in Lebanon are typically family affairs at the top but with loyalties running deep within their followers and clansfolk. So, when Hariri was killed, the country rose up—not as one, this being Lebanon, but as more than half, and Syria retreated, at least perfunctorily. Monster demonstrations—attendance at one was estimated to be as large as one million—erupted again after the recent assassination of the second Gemayel to be in Syrian gunsights. The pendulum swings.

What is the chemistry of these demonstrations? Some of it is sheer outrage at the stark freedoms that Syria takes with its neighbor. Some of it is out of fidelity to the individuals whom the Syrians have butchered. Allegiance to the Gemayels is a mix of both. Pierre, the paterfamilias who died in 1984, founded the Phalange in 1936. The fascist tag was not an accident, and violence was not a light habit of the bearer. But Gemayel was not a general like Franco or a philosopher or a cleric like the Catholic priest/fascist dictator of Slovakia. He was a small-town druggist edging over into a thug, with the determination to keep a vibrant autocephalous Maronite Catholicism alive in the country.

These Christians pronounced themselves European. Or at least Lebanese and not Arab. Actually, they did speak French. I recall a trip to Lebanon, in 1982, behind the skirts of the Israeli army. I went with a friend for lunch at Chez Eddie in Beirut, where we were asked whether we wanted a soufflé. Yes, we said, and in 20 minutes, mirabile dictu, it appeared. Just as Eddie was about to place it on the table, a bomb exploded on the other side of the city. But the other side of the city was only two blocks away. So the soufflé exploded, too. Or, rather, imploded. And Eddie, without blanching, told us that we could have another one in 20 minutes. The aplomb of the French Lebanese! The Maronite birth rate declined and that of Muslims increased. Massacres were common in the early days, and the Christians were as much their planners as their victims.

The violent internal vicissitudes of Lebanese politics may appear like the state of nature. But outside factors are often the decisive agents. James Baker has been a decisive outside factor before. After the Gulf war, ostensibly won by a wide coalition comprising Arab forces, Baker richly rewarded Syria for its (non)participation in Kuwait's liberation. He implicitly promised Syria the go-ahead to routinize its hold over Lebanon. To Hafez Assad, this meant the erasure of the border between his country and Lebanon. For more than 20 years, the real capital of Lebanon was Damascus.

Then, in 2005, out of fear that the United States, which had overthrown Saddam Hussein, might now turn its aim at him, Bashar Assad beat a retreat substantial enough for Beirut denizens to break out their Cedars of Lebanon banners. Even the United Nations put an investigation together to identify the Hariri assassins. All paths pointed to Damascus—more specifically, to Assad's brother and brother-in-law, who ran Syrian intelligence. Still, nothing definitive ever happened. Assad began to suspect that his retreat was unnecessary.

Once again, the Bush administration appears to have handed over its Iraq policy to Baker, the man who used to think for George W.'s father. Baker still seems to trust the Assad clan. Now, Baker wants to involve Syria in calming the waters of Babylon. But what will be Assad's price? The tacit U.S. blessing over his restored control of the Lebanese fragment of the Greater Syria imperium, no doubt. Nonetheless, Assad is not capable of doing the chore that Baker wants accomplished. Although he hails from a schismatic Shia sect, Assad cannot manipulate or persuade the Iraqi Shia that they need to ease up on their Sunni enemies. The Shia know perfectly well who Bashar is. They cannot fail to see that, while persecuting Sunnis at home, Assad has been sending Sunni warriors from all over the Muslim world across Syria's border with Iraq, where they massacre Shia on arrival. Just as Baker betrayed the Kurds and Shia of Iraq after the first U.S. military encounter there 15 years ago, the former secretary of state is prepared to betray the Christians and Sunnis and Druze of Lebanon to Syria, and all for a promise that Assad cannot possibly fulfill. ■

The academy and Iraq.

War College

BY ANDREW DELBANCO

IT'S A PECULIARITY of academic life that, every fall, I find myself a year older facing students who somehow remain the same age. This poses a problem for anyone who takes seriously John Dewey's dictum that "knowledge of the past and its heritage is of great significance when it enters into the present, but not otherwise." It's a problem because, with each passing year, I know less about the present in which the students live. I rarely venture into the

Andrew Delbanco is director of American Studies at Columbia University. His most recent book, MELVILLE: HIS WORLD AND WORK, *has just been published in paperback by Vintage.*

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blogosphere or get through a graphic novel. I know nothing about the music they listen to and not much about how they organize their private lives. So I decided last spring to teach a class on a subject that I figured might bring us together over a matter of common urgency. The subject was war.

For many in my generation (I'm pushing 55), the word "war" is nothing more than a degraded metaphor. I've known it all my life, mainly in slogans like "war on poverty," "war on cancer," and, most recently, "war on terrorism." The word recalls Ralph Waldo Emerson's remark that, when "words lose all power to stimulate the understanding or the affections," the "fraud is manifest." One of my aims in teaching the course was to try to expose the fraud.

We began with Max Weber's essay "Politics as a Vocation," which argues, with frightful salience for recent events in Lebanon, that "a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory." Since my students had read *The Iliad* in Columbia's core curriculum (which began as a "War Issues" course during World War I), we moved on to Simone Weil's essay on that poem, in which she describes the giddy confidence of the Greek invaders: "At the outset ... their hearts are light, as hearts always are if you have a large force on your side and nothing but space to oppose you. Their weapons are in their hands; the enemy is absent." It's impossible to read those lines, first published in Paris in 1940, without recalling the early days of the present war in Iraq, when embedded reporters crowed on Fox and CNN that Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard had melted away before the "shock and awe" of U.S. force. No one, as I recall, said much about their coming back to fight another day. Weil writes as if she had foreseen not only their return as murderous insurgents but also the crimes perpetrated by the "liberators" at places like Abu Ghraib: "We see men in arms behaving harshly and madly. ... We see them triumph over a dying man by describing to him the outrages his corpse will endure. ... Thus it happens that those who have force on loan from fate count on it too much and are destroyed."

Leaping over nearly 30 centuries and a thousand wars, we arrived at modern times via John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*, which contains a mind-boggling account of "long docile lines of young men" at the Somme, "shoddily uniformed, heavily burdened, numbered about their necks, plodding forward across a featureless landscape" into machine-gun fire that killed most of them. For World War II, we moved on to John Glusman's *Conduct Under Fire*, a remarkable book about his father's imprisonment during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. Before the surrender of Corregidor, Murray Glusman, a young Jewish doctor from Brooklyn, performed surgery by flashlight in a cave amid the roar of bombers and moans of wounded men to whom he could not tend even as they bled to death. Sixty years later, his son wrote an account of the siege and the infamous Bataan "Death March"—a book filled with blood and horror. Yet my students and I were particularly struck by one intimate detail: two toothless POWs sharing a single set of dentures so they could take turns eating.

We did our best to extract general ideas from such particulars. We talked about war's mythmaking power—about how General MacArthur emerged with a high postwar public reputation, while, to many of his men who waited in vain through the siege for his counterattack, he was a blowhard and a fake. We talked about the paradox of modern war—how, on the one hand, modern technology (long-distance guns, bombardment by air) makes killing impersonal and thereby less an affront to conscience, while, on the other hand, killing has become, since the Enlightenment, more a trial of conscience than it had been for Greeks, who regarded it as a test of valor, or for medieval Christians, who glorified it as delivering justice to heathens.

Reading about Vietnam was like staring into a mirror. In Philip Caputo's memoir, *A Rumor of War*, we read about men who called in napalm strikes upon shadows in the brush but who could not bring themselves to kill when they cornered an enemy soldier and saw the terror in his eyes. We read an interview with Lyndon Johnson in which he envisioned postwar Vietnam as a neo–New Deal electrification project: "I want to leave the footprints of America there," he told the interviewer early in 1965. "I want them to say, 'This is what the Americans left: schools and hospitals and dams.'" Sounding very much like George W. Bush talking about the United States as the world's engine of democracy, LBJ insisted that "the desire to be independent is as colorblind as aggression"—that Asians, no less than Americans, yearn to be "free."

Before the course could decently end, we had one more war to consider—the present one—which had loomed over us all along. After a discussion of the rights and responsibilities of the press during wartime, one of my students startled me. She's among the few people I've met at Columbia who actually has friends in the military—in her case, high school friends from back home in South Carolina. She told me that, when news first broke about Abu Ghraib, she found the actions there repulsive—but that she also felt anger against the press on behalf of her friends. With these revelations, she thought, their chances of being kidnapped and tortured or blown up by an IED would increase. The insurgents would be inflamed by the images of naked prisoners and snarling dogs. Her rationality favored freedom of the press and full disclosure of what our side was doing in the war, but her gut favored silence and, if necessary, suppression, to protect her classmates. It was the closest we came—and it was not very close—to experiencing the reach of war, which left this young woman unsure how to balance her loyalty to her principles against her loyalty to her friends.

I WANT TO believe that the course achieved something like what I had hoped for. It made me feel less remote from my students and, I think, they from me. But that was not because we had found shared knowledge. It was because we discovered our bottomless ignorance, living

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together as we do in an insulated present amid a few relics of the cataclysmic past. I found myself thinking of the cabinet in my living room that once stood in my mother's childhood home in Berlin, from which she shipped it to England before *Kristallnacht*. It spent the war in a London warehouse, somehow spared by the incendiary bombs that burned up the buildings surrounding it. For me, this squat piece of furniture has a kind of talismanic quality; when I open it, I am filled with memories of my grandparents and parents, who had their lives changed though not, in my family's case, destroyed. Somewhere in storage, I still have the jumping jack that my father built and attached, with a pair of cowbells, to the rail of my oldest brother's crib, where, set to leaping and flailing, with bells clanging, it was meant to drown out the sound of bombs during the Blitz. I try to imagine that sonic competition—but, of course, I can't.

No doubt my students have their own war tokens—a letter, perhaps, from a grandfather wounded at Normandy or from a great-uncle lost when waves of Chinese soldiers poured in after MacArthur's advance toward the Yalu River. Or they have heard stories about sit-ins and walk-outs from their baby-boomer parents, whose war reminiscences begin and end, like mine, with how they avoided going to Vietnam. But none of these traces leads back to the thing itself.

The course helped us feel the incompetence of words to convey the experience of war and, even more, the fraudulence of films in which, as one student wrote in his paper on how D-Day has been represented in the movies, dead soldiers "fall like toys off a shelf ... into water or out of the frame." And the course left us feeling uneasy about the modern university, in which students spend a few years and faculty spend most of their lives. It's been a long time since any leading U.S. university has had much to do with people who actually have experienced war.

When I was a young teacher in the 1980s, I knew a few who did bring such experience to their teaching—not by displaying or exploiting it, but by incorporating it in what they taught and why they taught it. I think, in particular, of my late Columbia colleague James Shenton, who had served as a medic (he was a pacifist and so refused to carry a gun) in the Battle of the Bulge. He spoke with great intensity about Walt Whitman's memoir, *Specimen Days*, in which the poet recounts his Civil War service as a nurse in a Union hospital where he held the hands of young men undergoing amputation, read to blinded young men, and took dictation for farewell letters from those closing in on death. I always felt that Shenton understood Whitman's America better than I could and that, somehow, his own experience of war underlay both his knowledge and his devotion to the young. His generation—yes, I know I sound like Terkel or Brokaw—is now going or gone, and it is not exactly the fault of my generation that fate spared most of us from the crucible. But it is no advantage, either.

For the vast majority of students and faculty in places like Columbia—it's different for support and maintenance staff, who are more likely to have friends or family in the line of fire—war is an utter abstraction rather than an imaginable fact. Perhaps the deepest divide in our country today runs between those for whom the war is a relentless threat to loved ones and those for whom it is a TV show to be switched on and off. At places like Columbia, the former is our most underrepresented minority group.

After the course was done and we broke for summer, I walked around campus seeking some memorial or plaque honoring the sons of Columbia who have died in their country's wars. I searched the chapel, the building that houses the president's office, and the hall where most college classes meet. I haven't found anything yet. Even colleagues who seem to know everything about the university have not been able to tell me where to look. ■

A progressive manifesto.

Liberaltarians

BY BRINK LINDSEY

THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT—and, with it, the GOP—is in disarray. Specifically, the movement's "fusionist" alliance between traditionalists and libertarians appears, at long last, to be falling apart. To understand what's happening, look at the Democratic gains made in previously Republican strongholds on Election Day. In "Live Free or Die" New Hampshire, both House seats—as well as control of both houses of the state legislature—flipped from the GOP to the Democratic column. Out in the interior West, Jon Tester squeaked past Conrad Burns in the Montana Senate race, while other Democrats picked up a House seat in Colorado (along with the governorship) and two more in Arizona. These parts of the country are all known for their individualism and suspicion of officialdom—in short, for their libertarian sympathies.

Libertarian disaffection should come as no surprise. Despite the GOP's rhetorical commitment to limited government, the actual record of unified Republican rule in Washington has been an unmitigated disaster from a libertarian perspective: runaway federal spending at a clip unmatched since Lyndon Johnson; the creation of a massive new prescription-drug entitlement with hardly any thought as to how to pay for it; expansion of federal control over education through the No Child Left Behind Act; a big run-up in farm subsidies; extremist assertions of executive

Brink Lindsey is vice president for research at the Cato Institute. He is the author of THE AGE OF ABUNDANCE: HOW PROSPERITY TRANSFORMED AMERICA'S POLITICS AND CULTURE, *which will be published in the spring.*

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power under cover of fighting terrorism; and, to top it all off, an atrociously bungled war in Iraq.

This woeful record cannot simply be blamed on politicians failing to live up to their conservative principles. Conservatism itself has changed markedly in recent years, forsaking the old fusionist synthesis in favor of a new and altogether unattractive species of populism. The old formulation defined conservatism as the desire to protect traditional values *from* the intrusion of big government; the new one seeks to promote traditional values *through* the intrusion of big government. Just look at the causes that have been generating the real energy in the conservative movement of late: building walls to keep out immigrants, amending the Constitution to keep gays from marrying, and imposing sectarian beliefs on medical researchers and families struggling with end-of-life decisions.

As a string of recent books attests, the conservative embrace of a right-wing Leviathan has left libertarian-minded intellectuals feeling left out in the cold. Bruce Bartlett, a Treasury Department official in the Reagan and Bush I administrations, blasted Bush II in *Impostor: How George W. Bush Bankrupted America and Betrayed the Reagan Legacy* (and got fired from his conservative think tank for his efforts). Cato Institute scholar Stephen Slivinski followed up with *Buck Wild*, an exposé of GOP fiscal incontinence. In *The Elephant in the Room*, *New York Post* columnist Ryan Sager bemoaned the rise of big-government conservatism and warned that excessive pandering to evangelicals would rupture the movement. And, most recently, THE NEW REPUBLIC's own Andrew Sullivan denounced the right's fundamentalist turn in *The Conservative Soul: How We Lost It, How to Get It Back*.

Libertarian-leaning voters started drifting away from the GOP even before Katrina, civil war in Iraq, and Mark Foley launched the general stampede. In their recent Cato-published study "The Libertarian Vote," David Boaz and David Kirby analyzed polling data from Gallup, the American National Election Studies, and the Pew Research Center and concluded that 13 percent of the population, or 28 million voting-age Americans, can be fairly classified as libertarian-leaning. Back in 2000, this group voted overwhelmingly for Bush, supporting him over Al Gore by a 72–20 margin. By 2004, however, John Kerry—whose only discernible libertarian credential was that he wasn't George W. Bush—got 38 percent of the libertarian vote, while Bush's support fell to 59 percent. Congressional races showed a similar trend. In 2002, libertarians favored Republican House candidates by a 70–23 spread and Republican Senate candidates by a 74–15 margin. Things tightened up considerably in 2004, though, as the GOP edge fell to 53–44 in House races and 54–43 in Senate contests.

To date, Democrats have made inroads with libertarian voters primarily by default. Yes, it's true that Markos Moulitsas of *Daily Kos* fame caused something of a stir by proposing the term "Libertarian Democrat" to describe his favored breed of progressive. And the most prominent examples of his would-be movement—first-term Governor Brian Schweitzer of Montana, fellow Montanan Tester, and Virginia Senator-elect Jim Webb—have sounded some libertarian themes by being simultaneously pro-choice and pro–gun rights. At the same time, however, their anti-NAFTA, Wal-Mart–bashing economic populism is anathema to free-market supporters.

In short, if Democrats hope to continue appealing to libertarian-leaning voters, they are going to have to up their game. They need to ask themselves: Are we content with being a brief rebound fling for jilted libertarians, or do we want to form a lasting relationship? Let me make a case for the second option.

SINCE THE LATE '60s, and especially the mid-'80s, torrents of words have been spilled urging Democrats to move toward the center of the political spectrum. Most such efforts, however, have advanced one compromise or another between progressivism-as-usual and conservatism-as-usual—a few more items from Menu A here, a few more from Menu B there.

But the real problem with our politics today is that the prevailing ideological categories are intellectually exhausted. Conservatism has risen to power only to become squalid and corrupt, a Nixonian mélange of pandering to populist prejudices and distributing patronage to well-off cronies and Red Team constituencies. Liberalism, meanwhile, has never recovered from its fall from grace in the mid-'60s. Ever since, it has lacked the vitality to do more than check conservative excesses—and obstruct legitimate, conservative-led progress. As a governing philosophy, liberalism has been moribund: When Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton managed to win the White House, they did so only by successfully avoiding the liberal stigma.

Today's ideological turmoil, however, has created an opening for ideological renewal—specifically, liberalism's renewal as a vital governing philosophy. A refashioned liberalism that incorporated key libertarian concerns and insights could make possible a truly progressive politics once again—not progressive in the sense of hewing to a particular set of preexisting left-wing commitments, but rather in the sense of attuning itself to the objective dynamics of U.S. social development. In other words, a politics that joins together under one banner the causes of both cultural and economic progress.

Conservative fusionism, the defining ideology of the American right for a half-century, was premised on the idea that libertarian policies and traditional values are complementary goods. That idea still retains at least an intermittent plausibility—for example, in the case for school choice as providing a refuge for socially conservative families. But an honest survey of the past half-century shows a much better match between libertarian means and progressive ends. Most obviously, many of the great libertarian breakthroughs of the era—the fall of Jim Crow, the end of censorship, the legalization of abortion, the liberalization of

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divorce laws, the increased protection of the rights of the accused, the reopening of immigration—were championed by the political left.

Furthermore, it has become increasingly clear that capitalism's relentless dynamism and wealth-creation—the institutional safeguarding of which lies at the heart of libertarian concerns—have been pushing U.S. society in a decidedly progressive direction. The civil rights movement was made possible by the mechanization of agriculture, which pushed blacks off the farm and out of the South with immense consequences. Likewise, feminism was encouraged by the mechanization of housework. Greater sexual openness, as well as heightened interest in the natural environment, are among the luxury goods that mass affluence has purchased. So, too, are secularization and the general decline in reverence for authority, as rising education levels (prompted by the economy's growing demand for knowledge workers) have promoted increasing independence of mind.

Yet progressives remain stubbornly resistant to embracing capitalism, their great natural ally. In particular, they are unable to make their peace with the more competitive, more entrepreneurial, more globalized U.S. economy that emerged out of the stagflationary mess of the 1970s. Knee-jerk antipathy to markets and the creative destruction they bring continues to be widespread, and bitter denunciations of the unfairness of the system, mixed with nostalgia for the good old days of the Big Government/Big Labor/Big Business triumvirate, too often substitute for clear thinking about realistic policy options.

Hence today's reactionary politics. Here, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the rival ideologies of left and right are both pining for the '50s. The only difference is that liberals want to work there, while conservatives want to go home there.

CAN A NEW, progressive fusionism break out of the current rut? Liberals and libertarians already share considerable common ground, if they could just see past their differences to recognize it. Both generally support a more open immigration policy. Both reject the religious right's homophobia and blastocystophilia. Both are open to rethinking the country's draconian drug policies. Both seek to protect the United States from terrorism without gratuitous encroachments on civil liberties or extensions of executive power. And underlying all these policy positions is a shared philosophical commitment to individual autonomy as a core political value.

The central challenge in cementing a new fusionist alliance—and, make no mistake, it is a daunting one—is to elaborate a vision of economic policy, and policy reform, that both liberals and libertarians can support. Here, again, both sides seek to promote individual autonomy; but their conceptions differ as to the chief threats to that autonomy. Libertarians worry primarily about constraints imposed by government, while liberals worry most about constraints imposed by birth and the play of economic forces.

The basic outlines of a viable compromise are clear enough. On the one hand, restrictions on competition and burdens on private initiative would be lifted to encourage vigorous economic growth and development. At the same time, some of the resulting wealth-creation would be used to improve safety-net policies that help those at the bottom and ameliorate the hardships inflicted by economic change. Translating such abstractions into workable policy doubtlessly would be contentious. But the most difficult thing here is not working out details—it is agreeing to try. And, as part of that, agreeing on how to make the attempt: namely, by treating economic policy issues as technical, empirical questions about what does and doesn't work, rather than as tests of ideological commitment.

Allow me to hazard a few more specific suggestions about what a liberal-libertarian entente on economics might look like. Let's start with the comparatively easy stuff: farm subsidies and other corporate welfare. Progressive organizations like Oxfam and the Environmental Working Group have already joined with free-market groups in pushing for ag-policy reform. And it's no wonder, since the current subsidy programs act as a regressive tax on low-income families here at home while depressing prices for exporters in poor countries abroad—and, to top it off, the lion's share of the loot goes to big agribusiness, not family farmers. Meanwhile, the president of Cato and the executive director of the Sierra Club have come out together in favor of a zero-subsidy energy policy. A nascent fusionism on these issues already exists; it merely needs encouragement and emphasis.

Tax reform also offers the possibility of win-win bargains. The basic idea is simple: Shift taxes away from things we want more of and onto things we want less of. Specifically, cut taxes on savings and investment, cut payroll taxes on labor, and make up the shortfall with increased taxation of consumption. Go ahead, tax the rich, but don't do it when they're being productive. Tax them instead when they're splurging—by capping the deductibility of home-mortgage interest and tax incentives for purchasing health insurance. And tax everybody's energy consumption. All taxes impose costs on the economy, but at least energy taxes carry the silver lining of encouraging conservation—plus, because such taxes exert downward pressure on world oil prices, foreign oil monopolies would wind up getting stuck with part of the bill. Here again, fusionism is already in the air. Gore has proposed a straight-up swap of payroll taxes for carbon taxes, while Harvard economist (and former chairman of George W. Bush's Council of Economic Advisers) Greg Mankiw has been pushing for an increase in the gasoline tax.

Entitlement reform is probably the most difficult problem facing would-be fusionists. Here, libertarians' core commitments to personal responsibility and economy in government run headlong into progressives' core commitments to social insurance and an adequate safety net. Yet a fusionist synthesis is possible nevertheless, for the simple reason that some kind of compromise is ultimately unavoidable.

With millions already dependent on the current pro-

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grams, and with baby boomers beginning to retire in just a couple of years, libertarians' dreams of dramatically shrinking federal spending are flatly unrealizable for many years to come. But liberals must face some hard facts as well. Spending on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security is now projected to increase from about 9 percent of GDP today to approximately 15 percent by 2030. Already, spending on the elderly consumes more than a third of the federal budget, and the fun is just getting started. If a fiscal crisis is to be averted, if economic growth is to be sustained, and if there is to be any money left to fund domestic programs for people under 65, the federal safety net is going to have to be recast.

One possible path toward constructive compromise lies in taking the concept of social insurance seriously. Insurance, to be worthy of the name, involves the pooling of funds to protect against risky contingencies; "social" insurance fulfills the same basic function but makes the government the insurer. Unemployment insurance is a species of legitimate social insurance; wage insurance, much talked about, would also qualify. But Social Security and Medicare as currently administered are not social insurance in any meaningful sense, because reaching retirement age and having health care expenses in old age are not risky, insurable events. On the contrary, in our affluent society, they are near certainties.

We can have true social insurance while maintaining fiscal soundness and economic vibrancy: We can fund the Earned Income Tax Credit and other programs for the poor; we can fund unemployment insurance and other programs for people dislocated by capitalism's creative destruction; we can fund public pensions for the indigent elderly; we can fund public health care for the poor and those faced with catastrophic expenses. What we cannot do is continue to fund universal entitlement programs that slosh money from one section of the middle class (people of working age) to another (the elderly)—not when most Americans are fully capable of saving for their own retirement needs. Instead, we need to move from the current pay-as-you-go approach to a system in which private savings would provide primary funding for the costs of old age.

These are only suggestions, meant to start conversations and debates. If a new kind of fusionism is to have any chance for success, it must aim beyond the specifics of particular, present-day controversies. It must be based on a real intellectual movement, with intellectual coherence. A movement that, at the philosophical level, seeks some kind of reconciliation between Hayek and Rawls.

If such an exploration could be launched, liberal and libertarian thinkers would begin talking with one another and engaging one another regularly. Over time, they would come to see themselves as joined in a common endeavor. And, in the shared identity that would emerge, there would be plenty of room for continuing disagreements, even sharp ones, just as there is in any robust political movement.

Can liberals and libertarians really learn to work together? I don't know, but their alternative is most probably to languish separately. ■

Nancy Pelosi's dilemma.

Full House

BY MICHAEL CROWLEY

IN THE BEGINNING—1994, that is—Newt Gingrich created the Republican majority. For 40 years, a Republican void had existed in the Democratic Congress, and then Newt made the ten-point Contract for America. The country saw it was good and bestowed the power of the land upon the Republicans that Newt had created in his own image. And, as they took dominion over Congress, Newt's followers rejoiced in the world he had created. They devised revolutionary schemes big and small—everything from new committee structures to quashing daily ice deliveries to congressional offices. But, most importantly, they pledged to work together in peace and harmony to ensure that Newt's Contract with America was fulfilled. It was, after all, the very reason voters had placed them in control.

Twelve years later, as Nancy Pelosi fashions her Democratic majority, she must surely envy the simplicity of the Republicans' 1994 creation myth. For one thing, as opposed to the Republican revolution—with its clearly sketched ideals of fiscal responsibility and term limits—there is no commonly agreed-upon story about how the Democrats came to power this fall. Progressives insist that their antiwar position inspired the passion of the electorate; moderates, including a crop of freshmen from the South and West, claim it was their middle-of-the-road social and economic views that led Democrats from the wilderness. And, unlike the Contract-toting newcomers of '94, who marched in devoted lockstep with their leader, Pelosi's troops—who include everyone from Barbara Lee, a Berkeley-based sponsor of a "Department of Peace," to Heath Shuler, a culturally conservative rural populist—have dueling agendas of their own.

Throw in a generous helping of old-bull chairmen like John Dingell—a 51-year congressman who already spent 14 years running the Energy and Commerce Committee in the last Democratic regime—eagerly returning to their perches of power, and Pelosi doesn't have a revolution on her hands so much as a restoration. The result is a caucus that swirls with grievances old and new, suspicion and mistrust, ego and entitlement. And, to make matters worse, instead of a Newt-in-shining-armor, reigning over this miasma is the battle-scarred, grudge-bearing Pelosi herself.

IF THE 1994 Republican victory was a revolution, the post-2006 Democratic House, with its fierce ideological conflicts, may look more like sectarian strife. With different party factions claiming credit for the party's success, each feels emboldened to assert itself. Take the liberal crusaders hoping for a party-wide ideological revolution—

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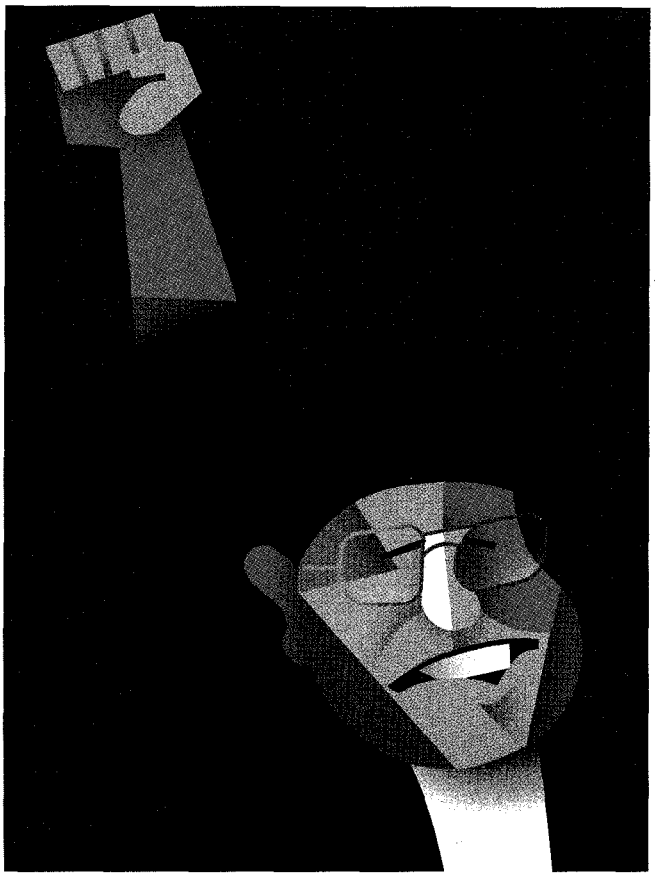

John Dingell, Democratic warlord.

the 71-member Congressional Progressive Caucus. If the progressives have a certain swagger these days, it's because they're convinced it was their vision—opposition to the war, unapologetic Bush-bashing—that won Democrats the election. What's more, House liberals consider Pelosi one of their own. Their votes have been critical to her ascension into the House leadership, and the progressive ranks include some of Pelosi's closest allies, including George Miller of California, Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, and rising star Michael Capuano of Massachusetts.

Still, the liberals are highly—and not irrationally—suspicious that moderates plan to shunt them into the attic like so many crazy relatives. Compounding their fear is Pelosi's thus-far cautious governing record. And, if Pelosi is equally wary of her liberal cheerleaders, it's understandable. Consider the current co-chair of the progressive caucus: Barbara Lee, best known as Congress's lone vote against the resolution authorizing the use of force in response to September 11—an act that led to death threats against her. Lee, who co-sponsored the bill to create a Department of Peace with Dennis Kucinich, also recently battled with Republicans to name an Oakland post office after a controversial peace activist. This is not, one hazards to guess, the party face Pelosi wants to present to the public.

Post offices and peace departments aside, the progressives will exert a strong pull on Pelosi when it comes to the war in Iraq. House liberals, led by Massachusetts Democrat Jim McGovern, a member of Lee's Out of Iraq caucus, have been trying to cut off funds for the war as a way of forcing an immediate withdrawal. Should McGovern continue pressing his idea, Pelosi will be faced with a grim choice between a debate that will be manna to Fox News and charges from the left that she's being timid on the issue that they say won Democrats back the House.

Pelosi may find it hard to swallow other progressive caucus ideas as well. While her own limited agenda includes broadly popular measures like lobbying reform and lower prescription-drug prices, Kucinich and John Conyers have sponsored a universal health care bill—a subject that stokes passions on the left but makes moderates blanch. Liberals will also make smaller, symbolic demands. Lee recently explained to *The Nation*, for instance, her desire for more Asian Pacific Islanders to testify as witnesses at congressional hearings. The spoils of victory.

Contesting this liberal faction are the House's moderate and conservative Democrats—or, as one House Democratic aide calls them, "The New Dogs"—a combination of about 100 New Democrats and Blue Dogs determined to keep Democrats on a centrist course. The New Dogs insist that several Democratic wins in conservative districts validated this strategy. "Our bark is louder than ever and we are going to be heard," outgoing Blue Dog co-chair Dennis Cardoza recently declared.

Barbara Lee's moderate counterpart is the leader of the moderate House New Democrat Coalition and Blue Dog Democrat Ellen Tauscher of California. Tauscher has infuriated liberals with votes to impeach Bill Clinton and to back the Iraq war. She once even explained that she came to Washington to represent her district and not "to be a Democrat." Tauscher recently warned in *The New York Times* that House Democrats must perform a "very difficult kabuki dance" to placate liberals without actually being very liberal. That sort of talk has made her one of the left's favorite new intra-party heretics; in the blogosphere, Tauscher has been dubbed a "corporate whore" (and worse), and liberal activists are already talking about mounting a 2008 primary challenge against her. Pelosi might not mind if they do.

The House's moderate and conservative Democrats won't just make it difficult for Pelosi to come up with a message that will please everyone. They pose the danger of aligning with Republicans on certain votes—perhaps national security and immigration—and undermining the new speaker's control of the House. The Blue Dogs' obsession with balanced budgets, for instance (their website's home page features a running debt clock), could mean clashes with liberals over budget priorities. And, while even moderates consider Iraq a catastrophe, few want to align with liberal calls for immediate exit or, worse, cutting off war funds.

Finally, there is the freshman class of 2006. Perhaps nowhere is the contrast between the House of Gingrich and the House of Pelosi clearer. In the first Gingrich Congress,

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DAVID COWLES

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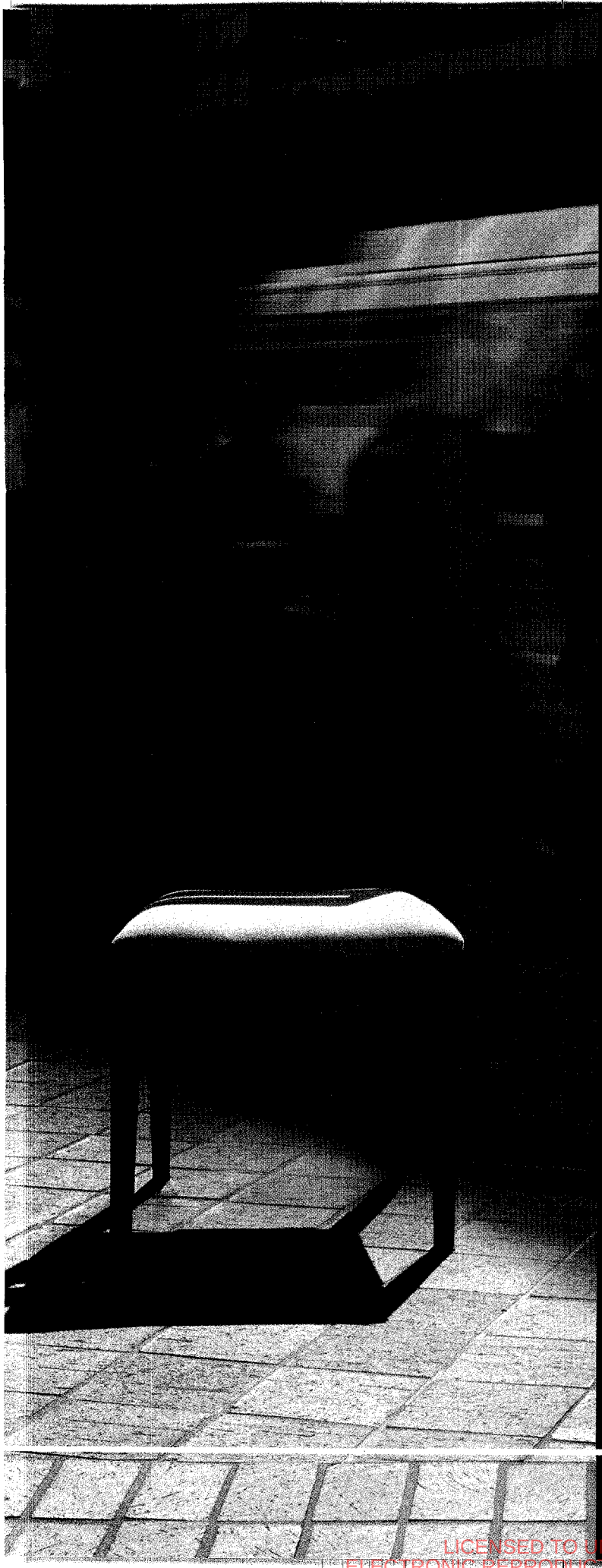

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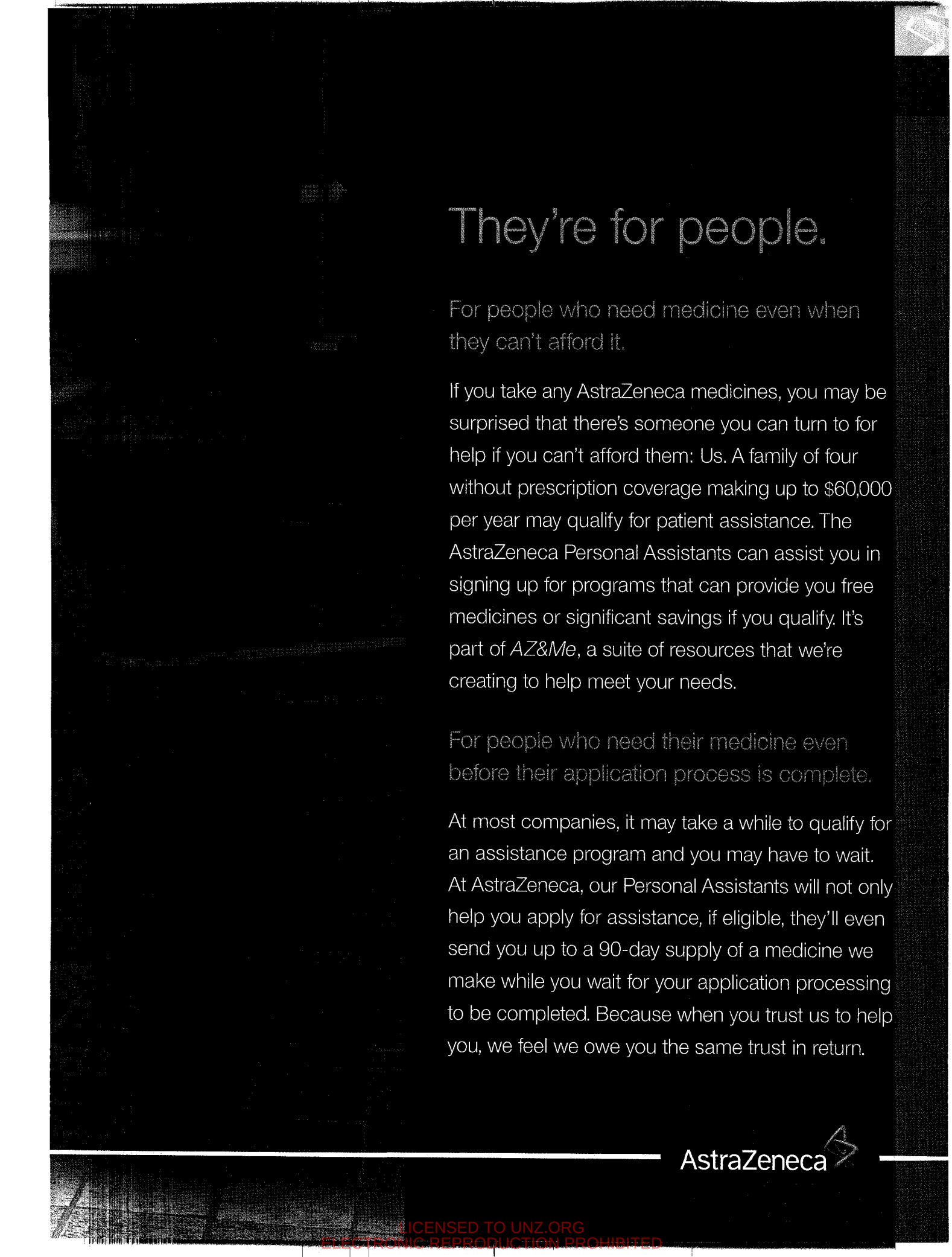
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the freshmen were fearless revolutionaries, barely concerned with their own survival. (Indeed, many imposed term limits on themselves.) But many freshly minted Democratic congressmen face perilous reelections in two years. The freshman class is also divided internally: On the one hand are culturally conservative populists like North Carolina's Shuler; on the other are anti-Iraq crusaders like former social worker Carol Shea-Porter of New Hampshire. As one former House Democratic aide says of freshmen from conservative areas: "They will be scared shitless and have to vote like Republicans—or they can vote their conscience and enjoy their two years in office."

BEYOND THESE IDEOLOGICAL fissures, the Democratic caucus's diverse factions are plagued by intense power struggles. African Americans, for example, will have unprecedented clout in the new House, with four committee chairmen and the House's number-three leadership position of majority whip, which will be held by South Carolina's James Clyburn. The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) is sure to expect handsome rewards for this influence—for instance, by way of budget funding for urban social and anti-poverty programs.

Despite its new influence, the CBC comes to power in a defensive posture, with animus toward Pelosi. In 2003, Pelosi irked the group when she passed over Louisiana's William Jefferson to run the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). Later, when Jefferson was caught with $90,000 in his freezer and accused of corruption, Pelosi called for his removal from the House Ways and Means Committee. CBC members were alternately described as "furious," "outraged," and "on the brink of open revolt," and they called the move discriminatory. And it's not just Pelosi: Relations are even worse between the CBC and Rahm Emanuel, the new Democratic caucus chairman and a party hero after managing this year's House elections as DCCC chairman. CBC members bitterly complained to Pelosi that the often caustic Emanuel harassed them over their party dues and fund-raising output, didn't solicit their campaign advice, and didn't hire enough black aides. The tension between the CBC and caucus leaders is likely to intensify, thanks to Pelosi's decision this week that Alcee Hastings, a former federal judge impeached in 1989, is too ethically tainted to chair the House Intelligence Committee.

Another of Pelosi's headaches will be the struggle to keep her committee chairmen in line. Pelosi has signaled that she wants to retain the kind of centralized power over committees that Republicans established, rather than revert to the system of freelancing chairmen that prevailed in the old Democratic majority. But that might not be easy to explain to the *ancien régime*. These Bourbon restorationists, including the 80-year-old Dingell, one of the few Democrats whose caricature appears on the storied wall of Washington's Palm steakhouse, view the Democratic victory as restoring them to their rightful positions of power. Pelosi has already battled 77-year-old Judiciary Chairman Conyers, who recently introduced a bill exploring the possibility of George W. Bush's impeachment. Other senior chairmen with, shall we say, high confidence in their own judgment include the 76-year-old Charlie Rangel at Ways and Means, who recently had to be talked out of pursuing the idea of a draft, and the 66-year-old Barney Frank at Financial Services, recently shushed after proposing hearings on gays in the military. And it's not even January yet.

PELOSI'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE may be overcoming her own notorious fixation on personal feuds and grudges. As minority leader, Pelosi has alienated an impressive number of the people she'll have to work with. She (and other House leaders) berated Collin Peterson of Minnesota and nearly threw him off the Agriculture Committee after he voted for the Republicans' 2003 Medicare prescription-drug bill. When Dingell faced a strong primary challenge in 2002, Pelosi donated $10,000 to his opponent. And Pelosi's once-warm relationship with Californian Jane Harman has dissolved into outright hostility after Pelosi declared she wouldn't name Harman to chair the Intelligence Committee, either. And, as any House observer knows, Pelosi can't even rely on chummy relations with her chief deputy, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer. Pelosi has been wary of Hoyer since he unsuccessfully challenged her for the position of House minority whip in 2001 and is mistrustful of his centrist instincts; hence Pelosi's recent endorsement of Jack Murtha against Hoyer for the majority leader post.

Somehow, Pelosi and Hoyer must find a way to stitch together these dueling factions and personalities—as well as to mend their own relationship. Some Democrats argue that the imperative of holding the majority will bring them together. "Nobody wants to end up in the minority again, and that's obviously a big carrot or stick, depending on how you look at it," says a senior House aide. But that's no simple task when people don't even agree on how they escaped the minority in the first place.

Perhaps it's not a creation myth that the Democrats need, then, so much as a vision of the apocalypse. The last time a wave of antiwar reformers joined the House was in the 1974 election, defined by Watergate and the aftermath of Vietnam. It would seem to have been a heady time for Democrats. But, as John A. Farrell recounts in his book *Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century*, "[L]iberals in the caucus were bent on ideological purity, while conservatives were feeling spiteful and neglected." Even a weak Gerald Ford was able to exploit the fissures, and Democrats "splintered over military spending, energy policy, environmental protection and other measures." The *Times* concluded that House Democrats were "fractured today by a rancor of an intensity seldom seen. ... Rarely has a party in Congress promised so much and accomplished so little." Democrats had better hope their restoration goes more smoothly than that. Or they can plan on hauling all their ideological and psychological baggage back to the minority. ■

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Worlds Apart

ACTORS LOVE TO PLAY GENIUSES. It's a chance to wear a superhuman aura without any of the burden. Geniuses of art are always favored: what actor wouldn't prefer Keats to Kierkegaard? Beethoven is of course one of the most dramatic roles, and portrayals of him have not been scant. The first I can remember is the French giant Harry Baur's in 1936, and the most recent is Ed Harris's in **COPYING BEETHOVEN**.

COPYING BEETHOVEN
(Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)

TWO OR THREE THINGS I KNOW ABOUT HER
(Rialto)

Only six years ago Harris played Jackson Pollock—not precisely in the Beethoven stratum, but still Harris showed fierce commitment to the sources of the man within the man, not his mere actions and ructions. It is not a step, or even a matter of steps, from Pollock to Beethoven; but faced with a human cosmos instead of a man, Harris has summoned all the thought and instinct and taste he can command—a considerable quantity of each—to keep his performance from being just another mad genius.

The beginning is partly technical: how Harris is physically altered. Beethoven's face is as well known as any great composer's, and it would be hard to find a modern actor who looks less like him than Harris, even with a wig and a reshaped nose. Further, Beethoven was, to a contemporary, a "sturdy, thickset figure," which Harris is not. But though a great many of us are sure we know how Beethoven looked and moved, Harris's first gain is that he overcomes our preconceptions. The inner strength makes his exterior credible. The storms, the depressions, the sometimes enforced but persistent conviction of his genius—these are only some of the colors that Harris masterfully paints in.

Now it is time to mention the director, Agnieszka Holland, who is Polish-born and Czech-trained, intelligent, imaginative. (Her last film of note was *Washington Square*, which was uneasy but which understood James's book.) It seems clear that the very making of *Copying Beethoven* depended on collaboration between Harris and Holland about his performance. Without a Beethoven that the actor and the director both believed in, how could the film have been made?

It seems almost unnecessary to point out that the screenplay, by Christopher Wilkinson and Stephen J. Rivele, is unhistorical. The plot is fantastication from the start: the only question is whether it is pleasant. It is. Rather, it is quite possible that much of it could have happened, and it is almost churlish to point out that it never did.

Anna Holtz (played by the acceptable German actress Diane Kruger) is a young music student in Vienna in 1824 and does some manuscript copying for the composer. He is furious to see that his regular copyist has employed a woman; thus we are prepared for his gradual acceptance of her and the growth of his trust. The score that he is working on is the Ninth, composing though he is deaf (still one of history's most stupefying marvels). By the time of the first performance, he and Anna have been through so much together—though nothing romantic—that he entrusts her to sit in the orchestra and beat time to guide his own conducting. (In point of fact, a male musician friend of Beethoven's sat in the orchestra and told the players and choir to watch him, not the conductor.) We hear a Reader's Digest version of the symphony, played by an orchestra about three times the size of the one we see.

Not long after the triumph of the Ninth comes the fiasco of the *Grosse Fuge* and Beethoven's illness. We don't actually see his death, which came a year later. Indeed, the writers and Holland seem to have been stuck for a finish. After some shots of the bedbound composer, we see Anna walking away from us across a great field. The meaning of this shot, Holland apparently hopes, will be supplied by us.

But her directing of the picture, aided by the lovely lighting of Ashley Rowe, creates a sense of transport to the past that makes much of the action credible; her security in the period helps greatly. But we are left finally with a double response: it is hard to know exactly why the film was made, what its emotional and thematic point is, yet we are glad it happened because of Harris's performance. Recently we had Helen Mirren's splendid comprehension of a famous figure; now we have Harris's of a titan. Mirren has the advantage of being in a generally sound film. Harris's film is much less sound, but at least it gives him a place to be.

Jean-Luc Godard's **TWO OR THREE THINGS I KNOW ABOUT HER**, re-issued in a fresh print with freshened subtitles, is an astonishment because, after the forty years since it was made, it still astonishes. Godard burst into the film world in 1960 with the unprecedented, invaluable *Breathless* and followed it swiftly with a spate of films, some of which were more heterodox than fulfilled. Then he made *Two or Three Things*, his best film since his first, a picture that was—and breathtakingly still is—both revolutionary and absorbing.

The "her" of the title is, he tells us, the Paris region; but he also tells us that it is Juliette Jeanson, a young wife (played by Marina Vlady) with children; and he also tells us that it may be Vlady herself. These intertissues are parts of the ceaseless, seemingly disconsolate inquiry that the film makes into the texture of Paris life, personal lives, even political lives. (Vietnam was present in French thinking then as Iraq is today.) Prostitutions of several kinds register: in French politics, in the renovation of Paris by profitable construction, and literally in Juliette's daytime hours in a brothel to increase the family's income. (Her husband never

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asks her where the money comes from!)

All these subjects would nourish a conventional film, which doesn't interest Godard. The method he uses is anti-method, a rejection of the strictures contrived by the world he is criticizing. Shots of cranes, of street signs, of interesting faces, of café talk—of anything that catches Godard's eye or mind—slip into the film's story like sudden thoughts, and the effect is of super-reality: alert consciousness rather than formal construction.

The result is like a frozen impromptu, which certifies a Godard aim through most of his career. He seems to hate the fact that film is filmed. He tries over and over in his work to subvert movie-ness: sometimes he shows the camera, sometimes he has people say they are in a film, sometimes he inserts seemingly random thoughts and sights, and so on, always to make the film seem as spontaneous as the form permits.

On the sound track of *Two or Three Things* he whispers commentary, some of it philosophical query at the college-dorm level—shallow, yes, but genuine. (This phrase could be reversed.) What keeps the film tingling is the fact that we feel it is actually being made (yet again) at the moment we are watching it. Since 1966, so much in film-making has strained for novelty, yet Godard's film is still avant most of the avant-garde. ■

Cynthia Ozick
Martyr

MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE: TAKEN FROM THE WRITINGS OF RACHEL CORRIE
Edited by Alan Rickman and Katharine Viner
(Theatre Communications Group, 57 pp., $12.95)

ON JUSTICE BRANDEIS'S celebrated principle that "the remedy [for free speech] is more speech," it is good and salubrious that *My Name Is Rachel Corrie* can finally be seen on a New York stage. Last year, when the play was turned away by the New York Theater Workshop apparently because of objections from donors offended by its agitprop banalities, there sprang up, amid the foolish cries of "censorship" (as if the Constitution were being subverted), a newborn legend. The longer the play was absent from local scrutiny, the more romantically its far-away halo might glow: a visionary young woman on the barricades, part heroic Joan of Arc, part victimized Anne Frank, mercilessly cut down in the very act of defying brute injustice.

To have the play actually in hand—the naked script itself—is a down-to-earth corrective. It goes without saying that any play, and this one especially, is both more and less than its script: more, because of the theater's sensuous surround—the emotive ingenuities of set, lighting, and sound; an attractive actor's winning impersonation; the magnetic rapidity of gesture, movement, and voice; and an audience whose sympathies are already in place, pacified by the play's radiant repute. But it is precisely on account of all these appeals to communal sensation that *My Name Is Rachel Corrie* is considerably less than its script. Stripped only to print, the play discloses what the theater's dazzlements are likely to obfuscate or diminish. Fortunately, we are assured by the director and co-editor that every word is Rachel Corrie's own, culled directly from her journals and e-mail messages. Are there incendiary omissions? If so, it hardly matters; what is on the page is revealing enough. This means that we can reasonably trust the script—perhaps understandably manipulated as to selection and sequence—to represent Rachel Corrie as she was, unadulterated by theatrical seductions.

RACHEL CORRIE, THEN, AS SHE was. She can be seen in two brief films on Wikipedia. She is in Gaza, a member of the International Solidarity Movement. In one film, she is burning a replica of the

Cynthia Ozick is the author, most recently, of THE DIN IN THE HEAD *(Houghton Mifflin).*

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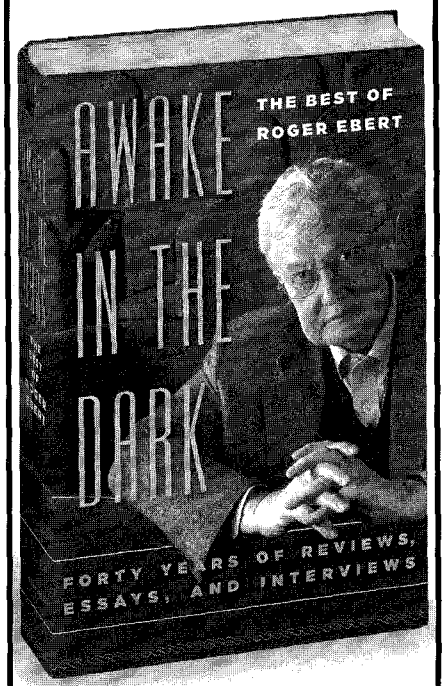

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—Werner Herzog

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American flag. Her mouth is wide, yelling. In the other, she stands fixedly, repeating phrases that appear identically in the playscript; it is as if she has scripted herself, and is speaking by rote. Wound around her neck is the familiar Palestinian scarf, declaring solidarity.

She is twenty-three years old. Though she hopes to become a writer, even a poet, much of what she writes is a facsimile. Her "poetic" passages are an amalgam of Bob Dylan and diluted-to-the-third-generation Allen Ginsberg. Her thinking runs to slogans and robotic abstractions. At ten (her fifth-grade "Conference on World Hunger" speech is reproduced), this formulaic voice is already in training, the boilerplate language already ingrained: "I'm here for other children. I'm here because I care. I'm here because children everywhere are suffering and because forty thousand people die each day from hunger. I'm here because those people are mostly children." In middle school she gets a free trip to Russia (she doesn't say why), where "everything was dirty." In her teens the spotted owl, suffering from possible extinction, is the fashionable victim of choice. At Evergreen College it is the homeless—including even the suffering salmon struggling through a pipe, "trying to get back home." And after the salmon, the Palestinians. "The salmon talked me into a lifestyle change," she explains.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARity Movement (ISM) is neither international in its origins nor spontaneous as a "movement." It is, simply, a front: a creature of the PLO, and under its vigilant supervision. In the United States, recruits are encouraged, partly funded, and trained by the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee. Though the ISM is touted as non-violent, in reality it acts not merely as a shield for violence but as its proponent. One of the leaders of the California ISM, interviewed on Al-Jazeera, is forthright: "We recognize that violence is necessary and it is permissible for oppressed and occupied people to use armed resistance and we recognize their right to do so." Every Friday in Gaza, a day dedicated to sermonic incitements in mosques, the ISM organizes riots at Israel's security fence, erected to deter infiltration by suicide bombers.

Rachel Corrie is portrayed as selfless by her advocates, and as a naïve dupe by others. Yet after some fleeting hesitation—"I'm really new to talking about Israel-Palestine, so I don't always know the political implications of my words"—by the time she is placed in Gaza she is a complicit enthusiast. Arriving in Tel Aviv, coached beforehand on how to elude security, she records "very little problem at the airport"; she has come forearmed by her recruiters with a referral to an "Israeli friend," who instantly vanishes out of her ken. "I took a shared taxi into Jerusalem," she continues, "and noticed that the Holy Land is full of rocks." Though she thinks of herself as a poet, on the road to Jerusalem, and bearing the name Rachel (her sister is Sarah, and her brother is called Chris), she is curiously untouched by any biblical resonance: the old, old memory of the land she has come to defy.

"Sometimes," she writes of her mother, "she wondered if we would be healthier, better children if she had taken us to church.... She was determined I would define [spirituality] for myself." On the road to Jerusalem, spirituality is nowhere, and there are only the self-defining rocks—deprived and inert stoniness. No cities, no society, no greenery, no population, no children, no birds, cats, or dogs, no sign of civilization ancient or renewed. In Jerusalem, in Israel itself, she sees nothing that she is not primed to see: a stony-hearted colonialist state. Israel is a nullity, despite some passing recognition that "Jewish people have a long history of oppression"—a standardized note immediately canceled by the expected covering cant: "I think it's important to draw a firm distinction between the policies of Israel as a state, and Jewish people."

Her training—she accepts the term willingly—takes place in Jerusalem. Escorted by Palestinians while waiting "to get to Rafah to join the other internationals trying to prevent the demolition of civilian homes," she observes "blue stars of David spray-painted on doors in the Arab section of the old city." She concludes, "I am used to seeing *the cross* used in a colonialist way." Once in Rafah, she is under military orders. "The neighborhoods that have asked us for some form of presence are Yibna, Tel El Sultan, Hi Salaam, Brazil, Block J, Zorob, and Block O." The new recruits are called on to stand as human shields before arms caches or shooter hideouts. If through some mishap a young foreigner should be hit, all the better: fuel for international outrage. She imagines "the difficulties the Israeli army would face if they shot an unarmed US citizen."

But in fact the "civilian homes" are weapons depots; or else they are outlets, sometimes with complicit families still in them, concealing tunnels dug from Egypt to Gaza. The tunnels smuggle guns, rocket launchers, explosives; and the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is there to stop the flow of arms intended for assaults on Israeli citizens, and to uncover the launchers secreted in olive groves and farms, where the gunmen also hide, or in the houses, where the gunmen hide among women and children. Rachel Corrie is in a war zone. She cannot not know that she lives and acts among guns and gunmen, or that the children who are everywhere live and play among guns and gunmen.

"Someone had been killed at the Rafah/Egypt border," she reports. She

The Son

A man goes up a mountain. He is moved by what he believes. He sees the climb as necessary, as no way out but through. He brings his son, who watches; son who still hasn't caught on. Son who has followed. Son who thinks one day he will inherit. Son who acts as if without brothers. Son who says yes to whatever is before him. Son who waits by the old rock, the low bush. Son who brought nothing but the rucksack he was given. Son who did not move beneath the knife. Son who saw the end of day as ecclesiastic, as blaze. Son who in time made all other sons listen to the story of the old man who got all the way up and who without looking back went over to the other side. Who disappeared as if looking for other sons. As if done. Son who walked in quiet and calm, having come back down, alone. Son for whom nothing was changed, was changed, and in the changing changed the world.

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and the other "internationals" are sent directly into the battle area to pick up the body.

> We were given a stretcher . . . and then we went out—each of us with a handle. We started into the field: five internationals plus Jehan [their Palestinian handler]. Jenny spoke over the bullhorn saying, "Do not shoot. We are unarmed civilians," naming the countries we come from and letting the IDF know our intention to retrieve this man's body. The first response from the IDF was shouting, "Go back."

They continue to walk toward the body, moving deliberately into the line of fire, which, as she notes, shifts away from them. And then: "A white truck with a blue light rolled up and the person in the truck spoke over the loudspeaker. Told us to leave. Stated, 'You'll get the body later.' "

ALL THIS IS CHILLING READING. It exposes the brutal cynicism of Rachel Corrie's handlers, eager, for propaganda value, to bait bulldozers and tanks with the lives of their young recruits. But it also exposes Rachel Corrie: she is not a dupe, she is fully aware of where she is, and what she is doing there, and why. She is a dedicated believer and a shrewdly practiced marketing adviser. Among her notes: "Set up system for media work." Phoning home, she leaves a message for her mother:

> I'm going to give *The Olympian* [her hometown newspaper] your number. Please think about your language when you talk to them. I think it was smart that you're wary of using the word "terrorism," and if you talk about the cycle of violence, or "an eye for an eye," you could be perpetuating the idea that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a balanced conflict, instead of a largely unarmed people against the fourth most powerful military in the world. These are the kind [*sic*] of things it's important to think about before talking to reporters.

To her father, in a lighter voice, she writes: "I feel like I spend all my time propagandizing Mom." Yet the statement to her mother, even apart from its cookie-cutter language, is a thing to marvel at. A young woman has journeyed from one continent to another to enter a history of which she is uncommonly ignorant. This is not the ignorance of naïveté. It is willful, and willful ignorance is indistinguishable from false witness.

She has come as a determined tabula rasa. Absent are the Arab annihilationist wars of 1948, 1967, 1973. Absent are the repeated Palestinian refusals of statehood, beginning in 1948, when the United Nations proposed a partition of the land, and emerging again in 2000, when yet another Israeli (and American) appeal for Palestinians to accept statehood was answered by Yasir Arafat's murderous second intifada. "A largely unarmed people"? The English-speaking pharmacist in whose house Rachel Corrie is billeted admits to the culpable Palestinian origins of the current fighting: "Before intifada—no tanks, no bulldozers, no noise. After intifada, daily." But even this close-at-hand testimony of cause-and-effect cannot sway her. The believer is cognizant only of her belief.

For Rachel Corrie, in 2003, living and

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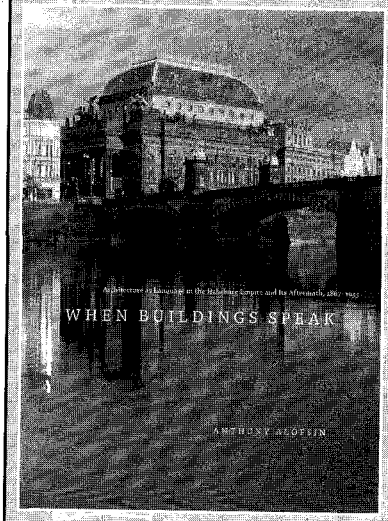

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writing in the very heart of the second intifada, there is no mention of intifada, only of Israeli aggression; no acknowledgment of ongoing suicide bombings, rockets, bus explosions, attacks aimed at discos, eateries, malls, holiday gatherings; no recognition, for all her concern for children, of kindergartens inculcating six-year-olds with the beauty of "martyrdom." Or, rather, if any of these matters are argued, even in a mild and sympathetic tone (her mother's), against her belief system, she justifies in mechanical phrases what she permits herself, at least once, to call "Palestinian violence." And follows immediately with dogged, and preposterous, false witness: "The vast majority of Palestinians right now, as far as I can tell, are engaging in Gandhian nonviolent resistance."

The mechanical lingo, with its neo-Marxist paraphernalia and hate-America jargon, is consistently on display. "I've had this underlying need to go to a place and meet people who are on the other end of the tax money that goes to fund the US military." "What we are paying for here is truly evil. Maybe the general growing class imbalance in the world and consequent devastation of working people's lives is a bigger evil." "I went to a rally a few days ago in Khan Younis in solidarity with the people of [Saddam Hussein's] Iraq." "[Children] love to get me to practice my limited Arabic. Today I tried to learn to say, 'Bush is a tool.' "

On one occasion she confesses to seeing a Palestinian family put in jeopardy through the meddling zeal of the "internationals." "Yesterday," she recounts, "I watched a father lead two tiny children holding his hand out into the sight of tanks and a sniper tower and bulldozers because he thought his house was going to be exploded. It was our mistake in translation that made him think this.... To think that this man felt it was less of a risk to walk out in view of the tanks with his kids than to stay in his house.... I felt like it was our translation problems that made him leave." But she is not really remorseful over the ineptitude of interlopers such as herself. "I'm sure it was only a matter of time," she comments, confident in predicting that the man's house will be brought down sooner or later—so what difference if the ISM plays with his children's lives in the middle of a war?

And finally she begins to contemplate departing from Gaza.

> I am trying to figure out what I'm going to do when I leave here.... People here can't leave, so that complicates things.... I really don't want to live with a lot of guilt about this place—being able to come and go so easily. I know I should try and link up with the family in France, but I think that I'm not going to do that.... It seems like a transition into too much opulence right now—I would feel a lot of class guilt the whole time.

Class guilt notwithstanding, she is ready to go—but where? To her well-off connections in France? That way lies neo-Marxist sin. She indulges in a dreamy list: home to finish college, Egypt or Dubai for a year, Sweden for a month, South America, Mexico. Lacking all historical understanding—South America is for her a single undifferentiated mass—and abandoning all responsibility for the possible consequences of an ephemeral sojourn, she can dip in and out of these places at a whim, and be off again to her middle-class American comforts. Succinctly, she advises herself: "Travel elsewhere."

THERE IS AN OLD-FASHIONED word for this mentality, the kind of earnest temporary do-goodism that is likely to do harm: the word is slumming. For a sheltered young woman from Olympia, Washington, the intifada, as furiously enacted by Palestinians in Gaza, and the deterring Israeli response, are a shocking and often frightening experience. In Olympia there are no guns and gunmen occupying households, and no rocket launchers concealed in the forsythia bushes. "This is another place," she describes it, "where progressive white people escaped a few decades ago—a place where hippie kids come after touring with jam bands." The salient term is "progressive." Long out of use because of its Stalinist taint, it has reverted to the common idiom, frequently in its newest anti-Zionist clothing.

As it turned out, Rachel Corrie did not travel elsewhere. A tragic casualty of the war she chose to join, she was cut down—horribly—by an Israeli army bulldozer. Contrary to the reports of journalists, the house she was attempting to shield was not a target. The bulldozer was clearing brush to thwart cover for launchers, explosives, and ambush. A photo taken minutes before the event tells what happened: the big growling machine is perched on a great mound of earth; well below it, shut off from the driver's vision and hearing, stands a tiny figure with a bullhorn. A piteous, pointless, heartbreaking death.

THE PLAYSCRIPT INCLUDES AN addendum by Tom Dale, one of the "internationals": the driver, he surmises, "knew absolutely that she was there." This version—a charge of plain murder—has, along with the notorious Mohammed al-Dura fabrication, entered the world's book of infamous fake facts. And for the opportunistic leaders of the ISM, which knows usable goods when it sees them, Rachel Corrie's death is neither piteous nor pointless: it is pure bonanza. A predatory organization that callously endangers its human shields by placing them before the hideouts of war, it purports to preach non-violence—except on its website, where it openly defends "armed struggle." Arafat, the warlord and terror chieftain who launched the intifada that was the ultimate ground of Rachel Corrie's death, lauded her as a "martyr"; for Arafat too, in the enduring propaganda blitz against the life of the Jewish state, she was usable goods. Media-savvy herself, she understood, as we have seen, the notion of a usable death: "the difficulties the Israeli army would face if they shot an unarmed US citizen." Her grieving mother and father, seeking solidarity with their daughter and her cause, journeyed to Gaza, where they were an immediate temptation to the armed kidnappers who prefer to seize Westerners; identified as the martyr's parents, they were left to themselves by the equally media-savvy gunmen.

In view of the play's manifestly political intent, and particularly in the lurid light of the editors' having concluded with an accusation of deliberate murder, the London audiences who jubilantly welcomed *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*, and the New York audiences who weepily do the same, should know at least this much: they have been spectators at a show trial. And there are Jews in the dock. ■

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Cass R. Sunstein

The Case for Fear

OVERBLOWN:
HOW POLITICIANS AND THE TERRORISM INDUSTRY INFLATE NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS, AND WHY WE BELIEVE THEM
By John Mueller
(Free Press, 259 pp., $25)

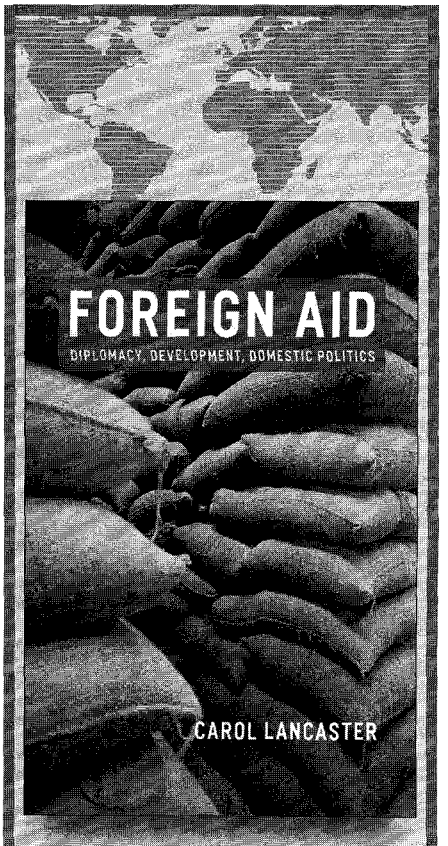
WHAT'S WRONG WITH TERRORISM?
By Robert E. Goodin
(Polity, 246 pp., $59.95)

IN 1995, THE POLITICAL SCIENTIST Aaron Wildavsky published a provocative book under the title *But Is It True?* Wildavsky's central claim was that many environmental risks are ridiculously exaggerated. In his view, governments often devote substantial resources to trivial or even nonexistent problems. For example, Wildavsky insisted that most abandoned hazardous-waste sites pose no threat to human life or health. In his view, the risks associated with asbestos and nitrites are far too small to justify the high level of attention given to them by private and public organizations. Wildavsky added that the pesticide Alar, a source of much public consternation in the early 1990s, was essentially safe. He claimed that environmental activists, and government itself, often exaggerated small risks, creating a level of hysteria that promoted their own agendas.

Though Wildavsky's particular arguments proved controversial, no one disagrees with the claim that often people badly overreact to risks to safety, health, and the environment. A highly publicized incident, taken to be a harbinger of doom, can make us exaggerate the probability that other, similar harms will come to fruition. And if the incident is emotionally gripping, it can lead us to forget about the question of probability altogether, focusing only on the worst that might happen. Consider the case of nuclear power: after the Chernobyl disaster, many people asked, "What is the worst-case scenario?" rather than "How likely, in fact, is a serious accident?"

In 2004, John Kerry, sounding a little Wildavskian, suggested that the risk of terrorism might eventually be taken to be "a nuisance," one that would not be seen as "threatening people's lives every day." The suggestion got Kerry in a lot of trouble, but it made some sense. Consider a few numbers. Fewer than three thousand people died in the attacks of September 11, but about forty thousand people die each year in automobile accidents. Even in 2001, Americans were fifteen times more likely to die in a motor vehicle accident than as a result of a terrorist attack; and seven times more likely to die of alcohol-related causes; and five times more likely to die of HIV; and five times more likely to die as a result of accidental poisoning or exposure to toxic substances. The terrorist attacks of 2001 increased the chance of dying in an air crash from a probability of 0.00000128 to a probability of 0.0000024. Since the 1960s, the number of Americans killed by international terrorism is about the same as the number killed by lightning or by accidents caused by deer. If an attack of the magnitude of September 11 occurred every three months for the next five years—an unlikely event, to say the least—the probability of being killed in such an attack would remain tiny: 0.02 percent, to be precise.

If people expressed the same level of concern about a similarly small risk in the environmental domain, it would be natural to wonder whether we were witnessing a grotesque overreaction. John Mueller believes that we are, and that the "terrorism industry" is responsible. In his view, that industry, which includes the American government, has essentially been doing the terrorists' business, because it has taken steps to scare people beyond all reason. In 2004, Osama bin Laden proclaimed that it is "easy for us to provoke and bait.... All that we have to do is to send two mujahideen ... to raise a piece of cloth on which is written Al Qaeda in order to make the generals race there to cause America to suffer human, economic, and political losses." Mueller thinks that the American overreaction to September 11 supports bin Laden's prediction. Terrorists seek to make people believe that they "cannot



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be safe," even if their capacity to inflict harm is sharply limited. Mueller believes that it is not terrorism, but the terrorism industry, that has made Americans so fearful, and so willing to believe that they are engaged in fighting not a form of international crime but a never-ending "war."

To support his claim, Mueller emphasizes the statistical realities, which seem wildly inconsistent with public perceptions. Amazingly, nearly half of all Americans remain "very worried or somewhat worried" that they or someone in their family will become a victim of terrorism, even though they are far more likely to die from small risks that occasion no concern at all. Of course Mueller knows that terrorists might be able to inflict much more damage than they have done to date, especially with weapons of mass destruction, but here, too, he believes that the threat is much smaller than most people think. True, nuclear weapons could inflict devastating harm, possibly killing tens of thousands of people or more. But it is "extraordinarily difficult" to make a nuclear bomb, and the dire predictions of the 1950s and 1960s notwithstanding, the proliferation of nuclear weapons has been exceedingly slow, in large part because of the technical challenges. No terrorist organization "has shown anything resembling the technical expertise necessary to fabricate a bomb."

Chemical weapons are easier to get, but their capabilities are modest, and Mueller believes that they should not be counted as weapons of mass destruction at all. One ton of sarin nerve gas, delivered perfectly under ideal conditions against a heavily populated area of wholly unprotected people, would cause between three thousand and eight thousand deaths. If conditions were slightly less than ideal—owing, say, to a moderate wind—the number of deaths would be cut by 90 percent. Biological weapons have far greater destructive potential, but for terrorists who seek to use such weapons the record thus far is discouraging. To work well, such weapons must be dispersed in low-altitude aerosol clouds, and that process destroys 90 percent of the micro-organisms. The really destructive effects of biological weapons take days or even weeks to occur, and in that time medical and civil defense measures can be deployed.

All in all, Mueller maintains, any terrorist group is likely to face exceedingly serious difficulties "in obtaining, handling, growing, storing, processing, and dispersing lethal pathogens effectively." Radiological weapons, or "dirty bombs," are easier to obtain and to use, but they cannot inflict a great deal of immediate damage. And if significant terrorist attacks do occur, the resulting damage, even if it includes hundreds or thousands of deaths, "can be readily absorbed"—so long as we do not overreact. (Recall that forty thousand people die in automobile accidents every year.) In Mueller's view, moreover, terrorists may "scarcely exist in the United States."

In these circumstances, Mueller contends that the massive attention given to the risk of terrorism is fueled not by reality but by the terrorism industry, which greatly benefits from that very attention. Politicians play a key role here, of course. Mueller does not question the sincerity of President Bush's concern about terrorism, but he does note that for many years the "war" against terrorism greatly boosted Bush's popularity. Bureaucrats play a crucial part as well. Consider the first page of the defining manifesto of the Department of Homeland Security, which Mueller finds absurd: "Today's terrorists can strike at any place, at any time, and with virtually any weapon." Mueller emphasizes that for bureaucrats, political incentives encourage the exaggeration of threats, so as to ensure that officials can "protect themselves from criticism should another attack take place." Of course the media plays its own part, offering "endless yammering" about terrorism, and failing to try to put the relevant risks in perspective. The media seeks to attract viewers and readers, and it is a simple fact that terrorism sells. With evident exasperation, Mueller notes that media outlets fail even to mention that for each of us, the underlying risk is very low.

Mueller also thinks that we can learn a great deal from past overreactions, and he gives a lot of attention to what he considers to be illuminating historical comparisons. In 1957, Americans responded hysterically to the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik, with an influential report warning that "the United States was falling behind in the arms race and in a few years would be much inferior to the Soviet Union in intercontinental missiles." For a long period, Americans were excessively fearful of the risk of internal subversion; McCarthyism stoked those fears, which persisted for decades after McCarthy's own demise. In 1954, about 42 percent of Americans believed that American communism posed a great or very great danger; ten years later, the level had barely declined, continuing at 38 percent; even in the mid-1970s, when the question was last asked, about 30 percent of Americans said that American communism was a great or very great danger to the nation. Mueller's lesson is that "there is a great deal in dramatic first impressions: once a perceived threat is thoroughly implanted in the public consciousness, it can become internalized and accepted as a fact of life."

Mueller points to many more examples of excessive fear. In the late 1980s, for example, Americans were greatly alarmed about the economic growth of Japan, wrongly seeing it as a genuine danger to America's national security. Americans have also focused on a long series of "devils du jour" supposed to threaten our interests, including Nasser of Egypt, Qaddafi of Libya, and Sukarno of Indonesia. In these and other cases, Mueller believes that fears greatly outran reality and sometimes produced expensive and unnecessary precautions. He thinks that the "war" on terror should be seen as an extreme example of the same political dynamics.

Mueller does endorse many of the steps that followed the September 11 attacks, above all the massive increase in international policing. But with respect to terrorism, he wants government to reduce fears, not to heighten them. To this end, he argues that public officials should "inform the public reasonably and realistically about the terrorist context instead of playing into the hands of terrorists by effectively seeking to terrify the public." Above all, he thinks that government should put the risk of terrorism in context, so that people can make sensible comparisons. Mueller's model here is John McCain, who has written, "Get on the damn elevator! Fly on the damn plane! Calculate the odds of being harmed by a terrorist! It's still about as likely as being swept out to sea by a tidal wave." But Mueller does not think that his prescriptions will be followed. Elected officials will play to public fears, simply because they have such strong incentives to do so. The same is true of bureaucrats and the media.

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Robert E. Goodin, a distinguished political philosopher, agrees with Mueller's assessment of the facts. As part of an extended discussion, he points to a report by the Office of Technology Assessment, which concluded that the likelihood of a serious terrorist attack (killing at least ten thousand people) is at worst "very low." He also accepts some of Mueller's prescriptions; he wants to domesticate the problem of terrorism, assimilating it to a range of low-probability hazards that people face. Indeed, Goodin thinks that "fearlessness" might well be a good response to terrorism, precisely because it prevents what terrorists most want. As a promising model, he points to London's relatively low-key response to the transport bombings of July 2005.

But Goodin's more fundamental arguments are conceptual rather than empirical, and for this reason his focus is radically different from Mueller's. Goodin wants to identify the distinctive features of terrorism—to see what makes it different from mere violence or war. His central conclusion is that terrorists "act with the intention of frightening people for their own political purposes," in a way that intentionally undermines "people's capacity for democratic self-government, by evoking visceral responses rather than reasoned reflections." For this reason, Goodin contends that terrorism is not properly defined as a form of unjust war in which innocent civilians are killed. Unjust wars need not involve terrorism at all, and terrorism may exist even if the victims are military personnel rather than civilians. Goodin contends that once we properly understand the basic category, we will be able to see that an entire nation, and not merely a private group, can qualify as terroristic. If a nation kidnaps people for political purposes, or assassinates the leaders of foreign countries in order to frighten their citizens into making political concessions, it is, to that extent, a terrorist. The distinctive wrong of terrorism, Goodin says, is that it "undermines rational discourse" in a way that "deprives us collectively of the capacity to be genuinely self-governing, reasoning together."

Goodin enlists these arguments on behalf of a highly provocative conclusion. In his view, public officials can fall within the definition of "terrorist" too, at least if they are attempting to frighten people for their own political purposes. Goodin does not claim any informed view about the intentions of particular people, and so he does not say that specific leaders, such as President Bush and Vice President Cheney, should be counted as terrorists. But he does contend that so long as the requisite intention (to maintain or to obtain political power) is present, a form of terrorism is genuinely involved, even if the warnings are offered with the belief that the underlying risk is real. He insists that if officials in the United States and the United Kingdom have issued such warnings in order to serve their personal political ends, they are themselves "committing terrorist offenses against the polity, every bit as much as the bombers themselves."

At first glance, this argument seems preposterous, a form of name-calling. But Goodin promises to offer "an exercise in political philosophy, in the hard-nosed analytic mode," and he delivers on the promise. Much of his argument comes in the form of a long series of hypothetical problems, designed to ask whether certain people, engaged in certain actions, count as terrorists. We can agree that if Jones, a member of some "liberation front," plants a bomb, and tells public authorities that the bomb will be detonated unless his group's demands are met, then Jones is a terrorist. We should also be able to agree that if Smith does not plant the bomb, but is a member of the same organization as Jones and tells the authorities the same thing, then Smith too is a terrorist. But Goodin asks: what about Williams, who does not work with Smith and Jones, but who supports their cause, receives a report of a hidden bomb, and goes to the authorities in the hope that they will accede to the terrorists' requests? On the basis of examples of this sort, Goodin argues that "whether or not the issuing of the warning itself constitutes an act of terrorism should turn on the intentions of the person issuing the warning." It follows that public officials, frightening people for their own ends, are to that extent terrorists, even if the underlying threat is real, and even if they are not responsible for creating that threat in the first instance.

Of course Goodin is careful to acknowledge that western political leaders who merely warn of terrorist attacks for partisan purposes are not nearly as bad as Osama bin Laden. It is much worse to plant a bomb or to use violence than to

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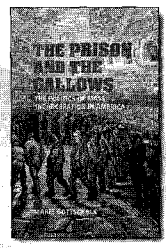

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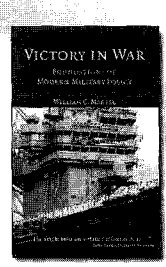

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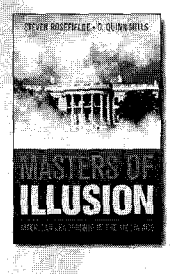

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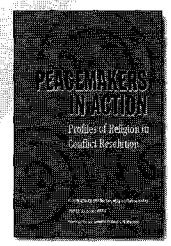

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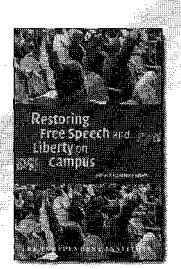

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offer a warning that other people are planting bombs or using violence. But such warnings, if issued for political purposes, nonetheless represent "a capital crime against democratic politics." Goodin concludes that certain political campaigns and speeches, pointing to the risk of violence, might well turn out to commit the distinctive wrong of terrorism.

MUELLER AND GOODIN raise a host of important questions, and their answers deserve to be seriously confronted. Five years after September 11, many people are starting to express skepticism about the magnitude of the threat of terrorism, and Mueller has offered the most sustained account of why that skepticism might be warranted. Many people think that Republican candidates and officials have been frightening people for their own political ends, in a way that badly disserves the democratic process. Goodin elaborates this claim and makes a much stronger one, which is that such conduct does not merely amplify the effects of terrorism but also counts as a form of it.

The first question is whether Mueller and Goodin are right to suggest that people have a wildly exaggerated sense of the risk of terrorism. It is true that this suggestion is fully consistent with current theories about risk perception. In evaluating dangers, people are influenced by the "availability heuristic," which means that they tend to assess probabilities by asking whether relevant events are cognitively available or easily brought to mind. In the aftermath of a rare and terrible event, such as an earthquake or a hurricane, people typically overestimate the risk of a re-occurrence. Since the attacks of September 11 have been so visible and salient, an inflated sense of the risk would not be at all surprising.

It is also well known that if people's attention is focused on emotionally gripping outcomes, they tend to neglect the question of probability altogether. When a bad outcome triggers strong emotions, people think about the worst that might happen, without asking about its likelihood. Defending the Iraq war, Bush showed an intuitive understanding of this point, trying to direct the nation's attention to a worst-case scenario: "Imagine those nineteen hijackers with other weapons and plans, this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known." Terrorists sometimes succeed in promoting worst-case thinking by making people fear that they cannot be safe anywhere. And in fact, people often do ask the unhelpful question of whether they are "safe" or instead "unsafe," when the only real question is the probability of harm.

STANDING BY ITSELF, HOWEVER, an understanding of how people perceive risks does not demonstrate that Americans have overreacted at all. After some salient events, such as the attack on Pearl Harbor, threats are more accurately understood, and not necessarily inflated. A highly publicized catastrophe can give people a clear signal of reality, leading them to see that they had been wrong to ignore a risk or to see it as trivial. The least convincing part of Mueller's analysis consists of his long elaboration of past cases in which people believed, wrongly, that some person or practice created a threat to national security. Hindsight is infamously 20-20, and it would not be difficult to catalogue cases in which nations neglected clear warning signs. Consider the relatively late attention given to the significant dangers associated with cigarette smoking, air pollution, and climate change (not to mention Nazi Germany). With respect to terrorism itself, the United States was doing far too little on September 10, 2001. Everything depends, then, on whether Mueller is right to think that the likelihood of a highly successful attack is small, and that if it occurs, the relevant damage can be readily "absorbed."

For two reasons, he might be wrong. The first is that the very social dynamics that Mueller deplores might actually argue in favor of the current level of concern. Psychologists and economists have long been studying the "social amplification of risk"—the mechanisms by which certain events ultimately impose burdens and costs far beyond those produced by the events themselves. The attacks of September 11 are an obvious example. As Mueller knows, many people decided to drive rather than to fly in the year after the attacks. Since driving is more dangerous than flying, about fifteen hundred people lost their lives—more than half as many as died in the attacks themselves. Those deaths are simply a small fraction of the extraordinary losses that followed the 2001 attacks, which include the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, large economic costs to taxpayers and private business alike, and countless increases in domestic security.

In this light, it is an understatement to say that an additional terrorist attack would result in massive burdens on citizens of the United States—burdens that would go far beyond the number of deaths that might occur on that day. Even if the likelihood of a successful large-scale attack is very low, and even if the relevant deaths could in some sense be "absorbed," it is worthwhile to do a great deal to prevent an event for which the effects would extend so far beyond the day itself. A loss of three thousand people is a tragedy, whatever produces that loss; but a loss of three thousand people from a terrorist attack is a crisis as well as a tragedy.

The second problem is that Mueller may have underestimated the danger of a successful attack, because this is a domain in which we cannot easily assign probabilities to future events, and because any probabilities that we do assign will not be trivial over the long run. What was the probability that a small band of terrorists, armed with box cutters, would bring down the World Trade Center? True, it is most unlikely that in any given year terrorists will be able to use nuclear or biological weapons against the United States. Any figure will be arbitrary, but let us simply suppose that the likelihood is merely 1 in 100,000. Even if so, the risk of such an attack is 1 in 10,000 in the next ten years, and 1 in 5,000 in the next twenty years—not the most comforting odds. To come to terms with them, it is important to distinguish between two questions. The first is whether any particular American should feel personally vulnerable to a terrorist attack. The second is whether the United States government should be undertaking burdensome and costly steps to reduce the risk of terrorism. It is possible to answer "no" to the first question and "yes" to the second.

To be sure, neither Mueller nor Goodin is attempting to specify the proper set of policies in response to terrorism. Neither of them means to mount an attack on general increases in surveillance and security. Their concern is public fear, not public policy. But even if ordinary people have been far more frightened than reality warrants, an elaborate set of precautionary steps remains worthwhile. And in fact, excessive fear may even be desirable, if it ensures that the public will

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support desirable policies that it would otherwise resist. Of course everything depends on how much those policies help and how much they hurt.

GOODIN BELIEVES THAT PUBlic warnings about terrorism might themselves be terroristic. Let us begin with a quibble. In his view, terrorism amounts to an intentional effort to undermine people's capacity for self-government. Does he therefore mean to make the implausible claim that, as a matter of definition, terrorism cannot be committed against an undemocratic regime? Suppose that Al Qaeda commits violent acts against Saudi Arabia, with the goal of influencing the government, but without trying to undermine the people's capacity for anything. Or suppose that pro-democracy revolutionaries commit violent acts in and against Cuba with the specific goal of promoting the public's capacities for self-government. It would be odd to exclude such acts from the domain of terrorism. Goodin's best response, which keeps his principal claims intact, is to concede that any use of violence to promote political change may count as terrorism, even if the victim is an authoritarian nation and even if the terrorists' goal is democratic.

But the more fundamental problem with Goodin's argument lies elsewhere. If Bush could be counted as a "terrorist" on the prevailing understanding of that term, then we had better rethink that understanding of the term, and start making some distinctions. Of course we should count as terrorists those who help to plant bombs with the goal of producing political change. Perhaps we can agree that those who approve of the goals of terrorists, and offer warnings in order to achieve those very goals, are in a sense terrorists too. But words have purposes, and for any reasonable purpose it is important to distinguish between terrorists and public officials who warn or scare people in part to achieve their own political goals. Lyndon Johnson did not engage in terrorism when he ran his famous advertisement warning of the risks of nuclear war if Barry Goldwater were to be elected president. Nor should we accuse Democratic candidates of being terrorists when they attempt to gain political advantage by frightening people into thinking that if Republicans get their way, the Iraq war will be prolonged indefinitely or they will lose Social Security or health care benefits (and maybe die prematurely). Unfortunately, there is no precise English word for candidates and officials who inculcate fear for their own ends, but "fearmongers" comes pretty close. We produce confusion, not understanding, when we subsume both members of Al Qaeda and fearmongers under the general rubric of "terrorists."

I do not mean to suggest that Goodin has no point. He is right to insist that a serious wrong is committed by those who deliberately scare people in order to obtain political advantage. He is right to object, on democratic grounds, to efforts to "play the terrorism card" in the aftermath of September 11. He is right to say that a good response to terrorism is to refuse to capitulate to mindless fear. Whatever our government ought to be doing in terms of security, individual Americans continue to feel far more vulnerable to terrorists than the statistical realities warrant. Our state of mind, and our behavior, will be better if we are able to appreciate that fact. ■

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David Nirenberg
Truth and Consequences

THERE IS NO CRIME FOR THOSE WHO HAVE CHRIST: RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN ROMAN EMPIRE
By Michael Gaddis
(University of California Press, 396 pp., $49.95)

THE WORDS "RELIGION" AND "violence" very often accompany each other these days, but in predominantly Christian Europe or the Americas they are rarely associated with the words "Christ" or "Christianity." On the contrary, a rough caricature of our common knowledge on the subject might look something like this: the God of the Hebrew Bible was a vengeful enforcer of law, and the God of the Koran sent prophets with swords, but the Christian God demands only love. "God is love," Pope Benedict XVI declared in his first encyclical. In this account, suasion and gentle reason, not coercion or authoritarian force, are now and have always been the appropriate paths to faith in this God, as the same pontiff reminded the world in his controversial speech at Regensburg a short while ago. That speech aroused Muslim protest because of the way it seemed to associate the history of Islam with unreason and the violent coercion of faith. But the pope's association of Christ and Christian history with love, reasoned persuasion, and uncoerced faith proved thoroughly uncontroversial.

That silence tells us a great deal about the place and the meaning of religion—and particularly of Christianity in its myriad forms—in much of the developed world today. No doubt there are still skeptics among us, scions of the more radical wings of Enlightenment, who insist that violence and tyranny lurk within every universalizing monotheism. But by and large, those of us who are heirs of the Christian cultures of Europe, whether in their explicitly religious or their secularized ethical forms, look for violence elsewhere. We associate Christianity with the turning of the cheek, not with retaliation; with the persecuted, not the persecuting; with the powerless, not the powerful. Hence the rhetorical effect of the anti-war bumper sticker "Who Would Jesus Bomb?"

Of course we all know that there have been many periods of Christian coercion: crusades, inquisitions, forced conversions, to name only some of the more infamous. So how should we incorporate these histories into our debates about what Christianity is, or should be? This question has occupied minds great and small for many centuries. Often the temptation is toward polemics: either these moments of violence prove the essential hypocrisy of Christian claims to love and nonviolence, or they are merely deviations, errors that may tell us something about, say, the darkness of the Middle Ages or the cruelty of Catholics, but have nothing to do with the teachings of Christ, and bring no stain upon them.

Michael Gaddis's fascinating book focuses on one of the most foundational of these moments: the conversion of the Emperor Constantine circa 315, and the subsequent integration of Christian churches into the power structures of empire and state. If this was a deviation, it was certainly a very long one: the partnership between Christianity and state power that was then established remained firm for nearly a millennium and a half. And because so many of the fathers of the church worked and wrote within this partnership, its consequences for religious and political thought have been enormous. For this reason, the topic of Christian violence and religious coercion in this early and formative period has attracted many fine students of the past, among them Erasmus, Gibbon, and in our day Peter Brown. It is high praise, therefore, to say that this book by Gaddis (who was Brown's student) helps us to understand the old problem in a new way.

"YOU ARE OF THE OPINION that no one should be compelled to follow righteousness," wrote one Christian bishop to another in 408. "Originally my opinion was that no one should be coerced into the unity of Christ, that we must act only by words, fight only by arguments, and prevail by force of reason.... But this opinion of mine was overcome [by the example of] my own town, which ... was brought over to the Catholic unity by fear of the imperial edicts." Who stands, in this exchange, for reason, and who for the fear of law? The letter's obscure recipient, the advocate of tolerance in this exchange, was one Vincentius of Cartenna, a bishop in an influential North African Christian movement known as the Donatists, which was fast on its way to being suppressed by episcopal styluses and imperial swords as heretical. The author of the letter, now convinced of the utility of fear, was none other than Augustine of Hippo, whose writings have arguably had more influence on the Christian cultures of western Europe than any except scripture.

It is worth lingering a bit with the protagonists in this debate, lest gray polarize into black and white. The Donatists presented themselves as a church of martyrs, and they did indeed suffer severe repression; but they were not themselves known as pacifists. Their zealots, a wrecking crew known as the Circumcellions, stalked North Africa wielding cudgels called "Israels," the better to crack the heads of their competition. Over the course of the fourth century, as that competition succeeded in defining itself as "Catholic"—from *katholicos*, or "universal"—and enlisting the help of imperial armies against the now officially "heretical" Donatists, the actions of the Circumcellions grew more desperate. We hear of Catholic priests blinded by having lime and vinegar rubbed into their eyes, of others dragged from their altars and beaten. One of these, stabbed in the groin and left for dead, managed to make his way to Italy and to display his scandalous wounds in the emperor's court.

If Vincentius advocated tolerance, said Augustine, it was only because his church, after being crushed by the Roman legions, was now powerless. "No wild beast is said to be gentle if, because of its not having teeth and claws, it wounds no one." But Augustine can scarcely be called an apostle of violence. His dedication to persuasion by means

David Nirenberg is a professor in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, and the author of COMMUNITIES OF VIOLENCE: PERSECUTION OF MINORITIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES *(Princeton University Press).*

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of the word is unusual even among the saints, as the vast record of his letters, sermons, disputations, and treatises attests. And although he was, like any successful bishop, a master of both secular and ecclesiastical power politics, he was in no sense an apologist for governmental violence carried out in the name of Christ. His writings on the subject, like those of any subtle thinker confronted by changing circumstances over the course of a long life, contain many views. Some of them, such as his letter to Vincentius, are optimistic about the role of secular coercion in bringing souls toward Christian truth. Others, most notably *The City of God*, are exquisitely aware of the difficulties involved in any alignment of worldly power with divine love. But regardless of the place they assign to physical correction in the shepherding of souls, Augustine's writings always seek to balance the rival risks posed by, on the one hand, the toleration of doctrinal diversity, dissension, and error among Christians, and, on the other hand, the deployment of coercive power to discipline that error and to establish Christian unity.

THE BISHOP OPTATUS, WRITING a generation before Augustine's birth, expressed one version of that difficult balance in the justification that he produced for the bloody repression carried out against the Circumcellions by the imperial commissioner Macarius and his army in 347:

> For this is the voice of God, "Thou shalt not kill," and this is the same God's voice, "If a man is found sleeping with a woman who has a husband, you shall kill both." One God and two contending voices. When Phinehas, son of a priest, found an adulterer with an adulteress, he raised his hand with his weapon, and stood uncertain between the two voices of God. If he struck, he would sin; if he did not strike, he would fail in duty. He chose the better sin, to strike the blow.

In sum, when confronted with errors of sufficient gravity, tolerance was a greater sin than violence. Many Church Fathers agreed. Jerome, whose edition and translation of the Bible into Latin established the standard text for more than a millennium, was quite clear that normal restraints did not apply when punishing an offense against God: "There is no cruelty in regard for God's honor." Quoting Psalm 138, Jerome argued not for love, but for hating with a "perfect hatred" those who "hate God." John Chrysostom, whose writings acquired an importance in the Greek East roughly comparable to that of Augustine in the Latin West, produced a more pugilistic prose, but his point was the same: "should you hear anyone ... blaspheming God; go up to him and rebuke him; and should it be necessary to inflict blows, spare not to do so. Smite him on the face; strike his mouth; sanctify thy hand with the blow." Chrysostom himself was charged by a synod of bishops with punching a certain Memnon in the face, then forcing him to take communion while bleeding from the mouth. Had he known the words of the early fifth-century Egyptian monk Shenoute, he might have quoted them in his own defense: "There is no crime for those who have Christ."

I DO NOT MEAN TO SUGGEST THAT Christians (or anyone else) found the use of physical violence in religious disputes unproblematic. There were doubtless many who would have agreed that Chrysostom went too far. Did not the Apostolic Canons—produced in Chrysostom's Antioch in the mid to late fourth century—forbid clerics to strike an errant believer? "In no way did our Lord teach this—indeed he was struck and did not strike back." We will return to the question of whether the Lord did or did not strike back, since it was a question much debated in the day. My point here is that Christians did not speak with one voice, that those supporting religious coercion were not marginal, and that the violence they threatened was widely felt, not only by non-Christians (pagans, Jews, Manichees, and so on) but also by many a believer in Christ.

It is this last category that most interests Gaddis. He does not skip over the destruction of temples or the burning of synagogues, but the bulk of his pages is intended as a disheartening chronicle of the destruction that Christian sectarians armed with weapons of state could wreak upon one another. The word "sectarianism" is Gaddis's. He uses it to imply a comparison with modern religious violence (a parallel with contemporary Islamic extremism is occasionally adumbrated in the footnotes), and he defines it in terms borrowed from Mary Douglas: "sectarian bias" means "polarized arguments, persons shown in black and white contrasts, evil and good, and nothing in between." "The dangers to the sectarian ideal are worldliness and conspiracy.... The remedies most easily proposed in such organizations are to refuse to compromise with evil and to root it out, accompanied by a tendency toward intolerance and drastic solutions." The definition is perhaps not very helpful: Gaddis sometimes cloaks his arguments in prêt-à-porter generalizations (returning too often to the same line by Hannah Arendt, about violence beginning as means but ending as ends). But the occasional bagginess does not conceal the underlying elegance of the history that he tells.

GADDIS BEGINS THAT HISTORY with the conflict that broke out in the aftermath of the persecutions in the late third century, as the last pagan emperors confronted the rapidly growing Christian movement. The Donatists refused to recognize clerics who had denied out of fear their allegiance to Christ, however temporary that denial. The Catholics, on the other hand, insisted on the ongoing authority of priests and bishops who had bowed under compulsion but then returned to the church. The resulting struggle would last nearly a century, during which both sides wrestled for the mantle of martyrdom and the title of persecuted church. This title was important, because from its earliest days the Jesus movement had understood its persecution (by Jews, by pagans, by Satan and his principalities) as evidence of its righteousness. With Christians in power, the language of persecution changed its targets but did not lose its force. Rival churches were now the enemy, and the Christian governors that favored them were the persecuting tyrants. But our church, the true church, no matter how powerful or politically dominant, remained persecuted and martyred.

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Because the title of persecuted church was so powerful, there were plenty of candidates for it. Gaddis begins with the Donatists, but goes on to chronicle the numerous confrontations, whether Christological, ecclesiological, or political, that produced the fractured religious landscape of the late Roman Empire. Anomoians versus Homoians versus Homoousians; monks versus bishops; Alexandria, Antioch, Rome, and Constantinople against one another.... The violent conflicts and scandals of this era of "robber councils" and militarized monks are the caffeine that carries Gibbon through many pages of his great work, and they energize Gaddis as well.

He demonstrates nicely how the resulting spiral of inter-ecclesiastical violence led many an exhausted bishop to conclude that imperial officials were a necessary counterbalance to righteous patriarchs: hence the deliberate inclusion of generals, governors, and senators at the great church council of Chalcedon, which sought to establish consensus about the human and divine nature of Jesus Christ. But secular force, however stabilizing, did not eliminate the feeling (or the reality) of persecution in those provinces, such as Egypt, whose populations held views that came to be labeled heterodox. For many in these regions, the Christian emperor was a persecuting tyrant, and they may well have welcomed the armies of Islam—whose dust clouds loom just over the horizons of this book—as harbingers of religious freedom.

RELIGIOUS COERCION AND VIOlence of this type will strike some modern readers as incompatible with a Christian faith that teaches that "God is love." This "incompatibility" was perhaps less sharp for ancient Christians, who did not think that God's love excluded his anger or his jealousy; but still they worried about the problem a good deal. As usual, one of the most constructive of these worriers was Augustine, and the solution that he proposed in (among other places) his Epistle 185 proved enduring:

> It is indeed better, as no one ever could deny, that men should be led to worship God by teaching, than that they should be driven to it by fear of punishment or pain; but it does not follow that because the former course produces the better men, therefore those who do not yield to it should be neglected. For many have found advantage, as we have proved, and are proving daily by actual experiment, in being first compelled by fear or pain, so that they might afterwards be influenced by teaching.... While those are certainly better who are guided aright by love, those are certainly more numerous who are corrected by fear.... "He that spareth the rod hateth the son."

In other words, the violence of the true church was justified because it was motivated by love, and in the best spiritual interest of the victim: "she persecutes in the spirit of love; they [the impious] in the spirit of wrath; she that she might correct, they that they might overthrow." The metaphors that apply to this Christian violence are those of child-rearing, shepherding, and medicine. We pull the hair of children who are about to play with serpents, and we cut gangrene from the sick no matter how much they cry. If children were never disciplined, would they not grow up to be intolerable? Through such "disciplinary violence"—the phrase is Gaddis's, not Augustine's—God corrects creation, parents and teachers correct children, and the church of Christ corrects those who do not believe in her truth.

We need not adhere to the parenting techniques of Augustine's age (in the *Confessions* he compares learning grammar in school to martyrdom, so often were the students beaten) in order to recognize that there is nothing trivial about his claim that compulsion can be an act of love. From a parent's perspective, Augustine's view probably makes far more sense than Kant's enlightened argument against any coercion of children. In less careful hands than Augustine's, however, it becomes difficult to know where "tough love" ends and righteous abuse begins. Medieval theologians and crusaders considered the killing of Muslims an "act of love," because the victims were thereby prevented from living to commit more mortal sins. The difference between "sharp mercy" and "utter mercilessness" was so small for Martin Luther that he used the two as synonyms in 1543 in his treatise *On the Jews and Their Lies*.

Moreover, the paternalistic claim here is not limited to children, to Jews, or to others commonly agreed to be especially deficient in reason. It is extended to all humanity. No matter their age or religion, no one may be allowed total freedom to follow their will or their reason if it leads them into error. This view was by no means confined to the Catholicism of late antiquity, the Middle Ages, or the Counter-Reformation. It provided a powerful strand also in the church's modern critique of liberalism. To grant humanity the right of freedom of conscience would be, in the view of Pope Pius IX in 1864, "delirium."

GADDIS CALLS THE CONSTANtinian period of the union between Christianity and Roman Empire a "time of unique importance." Certainly no one who reads this book will fail to appreciate the double bind in which the sectarian monks and bishops of Gaddis's world found themselves: struggling with new weapons of state for the universal validity of each of their various particular truths, but subject to the rule of emperors who prized unity, stability, and consensus above all. It may well be, as Arnaldo Momigliano once suggested, that the resulting mess is evidence that monotheism was not well suited to the task of managing diversity in ancient empires. Still, it would be useful to know just how "unique" these difficulties were. Is the Christian problem with violence entirely the contingent product of a spiritual faith's necessary compromises as it assumed imperial power? If so, then it should be possible to return, through Christian reform, to the pristine love of a more primitive church. Or is the potential for violence in some way embedded within the fundamental beliefs of Christianity itself?

The question has for centuries been a loaded one. Gibbon, in the fifteenth chapter of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, suggested that the origins of the problem lay not with empire, but within the institutional structures

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of the church, and above all in the ambitions of its bishops. Primitive Christians would have nothing to do with power, Gibbon declared. They "refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defense of the empire ... [and were] dead to the business and pleasures of the world; but their love of action ... soon revived, and found a new occupation in the government of the Church." Coercion and compulsion were the result. Echoing Locke's essay on toleration, Gibbon granted that "it is the undoubted right of every society to exclude from its communion and benefits such among its members as reject or violate those regulations which have been established by general consent." But many bishops (Cyprian of Carthage is a favorite culprit) became "rigid and inflexible casuists," abandoning the "milder sentiments" of the "purest and most respectable of the Christian Churches," and "covering their ambition with the fair pretense of the love of order." And more: "Sometimes we might imagine that we were listening to the voice of Moses, when he commanded the earth to open, and to swallow up, in consuming flames, the rebellious race which refused obedience to the priesthood of Aaron; and we should sometimes suppose that we heard a Roman consul asserting the majesty of the republic, and declaring his inflexible resolution to enforce the rigor of the laws." According to the Protestant Gibbon, then, the bishops of the early church displayed "Mosaic" tendencies toward love of power, compulsion, and theocracy long before they were ushered into the halls of imperial palaces.

Writing roughly a century later, around 1900, the great German theologian Adolph Harnack pushed the problem even further back. Beginning with Paul if not already before, he argued, early Christian thought drew heavily on metaphors of war and violent combat. Early Christians were the *militia Christi*, the "army of Christ," locked in combat with demons, and bound to God their general and to each other through the "sacramentum," the soldier's loyalty oath. Non-Christians were at best *pagani*, "civilians" in this struggle. At worst they were, like Jews and persecuting emperors, the enemies of Christ's militia, soldiers of Satan and his Principalities. According to Harnack, such sentiments, and the potential for violent action that they might facilitate, were alien to the teachings of Jesus himself. But they had been an essential part of Christianity's mother religion, Judaism, and it was only natural that the young daughter-church could not quite shake this inheritance.

Much as we might want to know the answers to these questions about earlier Christianity, it was perhaps prudent of Gaddis not to engage them, given the polemics that they seem to provoke. He does dedicate two pages of his introduction to Christian violence before Constantine, and in these he alludes to the tendency of early Christianity to postulate "a world sharply divided between truth and falsehood, beset by perceived enemies both outside and within." He goes no further, beyond a gesture to Elaine Pagels's work on how first- and second-century theologians "demonized" their enemies. But his book contains plenty of evidence that when his angry fourth- and fifth-century clerics asked themselves, as they frequently did, "What would Jesus do?" they found sufficient justification for their actions in the records they had of his words and deeds. In this sense, their arguments are themselves an early inquiry into the potential for violence and compulsion in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The trial by synod of Bishop Rabbula on charges of beating clerics provides a case in point. The bishop defended himself by invoking the example of Jesus, who chased the money changers out of the temple. His colleague Theodore of Mopsuestia contradicted him, citing Matthew 21:12: Jesus overturned the tables, and "drove out" (*exebalen*) the money changers, but he never hit anyone. Yet according to John 2:14-16, Jesus had wielded a whip of cords (*phragellion ek skhoinion*). Did he use it against people, as Bishop Rabbula insisted, or only against livestock, as Theodore claimed? All the scriptural passages that suggest a Jesus willing to use force were subjected to this kind of scrutiny in late antiquity. The same is true of those passages that could endorse compulsion in religion. Did Jesus not say, in his parable of the banquet, "Go to the open roads and the hedgerows and force people to come in to make sure my house is full?" This, for Augustine, was evidence that people should be "compelled to follow righteousness."

We can see these exegetical sensitivities at work in many of the stories that Christians told about violence, even when they cite no scripture. Julian the Apostate, for example, died of wounds incurred at an unknown hand in battle against Persia in 363. Although Julian did not persecute Christians, his attempt to re-orient the empire toward pagan worship had made him, from the church's point of view, a persecutor and tyrant. Not surprisingly, a "revenge" legend about his death became widespread:

> Basil, the most holy bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, saw in a dream the heavens opened and the Savior Christ seated on a throne and saying loudly, "Mercurius, go and kill the emperor Julian, who is against the Christians." Saint Mercurius, standing before the Lord, wore a gleaming iron breast-plate. Hearing the command, he disappeared, and then he reappeared, standing before the Lord, and cried out, "The emperor Julian has been fatally wounded and has died, as you commanded, Lord."

To those raised in more modern versions of Christianity, these ancient stories may sound more like *The Godfather* than like the God of love. This is not because our ears are better than theirs, but because theirs were attuned to a register of Jesus' voice that many today can no longer hear: "As for my enemies who did not want me for their king, bring them here and execute them in my presence."

The point of Michael Gaddis's book is surely not that Christianity has a propensity for violence, or that its professions of love are hypocritical. Its point is simpler, more banal, and, although it is mentioned almost in passing, much more important: that "Christian scripture and doctrine contained the basis both for violence and for the condemnation of violence." The same could be said of every rich scriptural tradition in the world. The great Christian theologians of late antiquity seem not to have forgotten this ambivalence; and neither, at a time when religions are again beginning to test their moral muscles against one another, should we. ■

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Group Think

I LIVE IN THE BEST APARTMENT IN Washington. True, it won't be featured in the Style section any time soon, what with the kitchen arranged in a fashion some might call "fire hazard" and the wall's little nooks left by crumbled grout that I can hold my hand over to feel the wind on gusty days. But the rooms are big, the location is sweet, and the rent is $375 per month. The latter is especially important, since I am a journalist, and, for the benefactorless among us, it can take some creativity not to end up homeless. In that sense, I am lucky. But the best feature of my apartment is actually my awesome roommate, who did not make me pass a political litmus test to live here.

WE WON'T DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS of politics, but if Palestine is a dirty word for you, you may have a challenging time here.—Ad on Craigslist.org for a roommate in Northwest Washington.

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY STORIES ABOUT the polarization of Congress and how it has led to toxic animosity among our elected officials. But what about the grunts? One of the things I've learned since moving to Washington is that even young people can't live together here without weighing the ideological implications. The proof is on Craigslist: A lot of people note their political preference in roommate-wanted ads, sometimes before smoking preference, sometimes after. An ad headlined "ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?" included this note at the bottom: "Liberals and flakes need not apply." The advertiser, a government contractor named Doug, is quite candid about the dangers of sharing his pad with liberals. "[T]he mindset of a typical liberal is to blame others for their problems," Doug explains, "and we don't want to live with somebody that will unfairly blame us for their problems." Maybe an ex-housemate framed him after swiping the cheese puffs? I ask Doug if he has any horror stories from living with bleeding hearts. "Most of my roommates have had my conservatism rub off on them because I talk it and act it and live it," he says. "I had one dropout, but there wasn't any animosity. He said he voted for Kerry, and I just shook my head. He just didn't understand everything correctly."

IT FITS THE STEREOTYPE THAT A CONSERvative would not be able to bear living with someone who's not into Fox News. That's why it is so refreshing to read through the ads posted by liberals in which tolerance is a recurring theme. One very tolerant woman named Julie explained in her ad that she and her housemates are "pretty laid back, but to live with us you do need to be non-racist and non-homophobic." Maybe she's had a bad experience with someone who was otherwise? No. She tells me she has never lived with anyone who didn't share her views. Julie puts her political orientation in her ad because she's "part of an interracial couple and my housemate is gay, so we like to put this up front so that no NRA white-supremacist homophobes [will] think they might want to live here." (Otherwise, presumably, she'd have to beat back the hordes of gun-lovers desperate to live with her in this handgun-free city.)

THE TERM "LIBERAL" ITSELF SIGNIFIES a lifestyle, as ad posters often elaborate with you-are-what-you-consume personality traits, such as that a house's occupants listen to NPR or drink wine (I am not making this up! David Brooks popularizes a stereotype and the stereotyped embrace it). To wit: "[I]f you are smart, or creative, or into the arts, or activism, or community, biking, cooking, recycling, gardening, outdoors, etc., we'll have plenty in common." In Washington, there are far more liberal and progressive ads than conservative ones. One ad seeks a "young responsible professional … open minded and tolerant; no conservative politics or religion." Another: "Must be laid back and not too conservative." Another: "[N]ot a conservative or any other type of square." Kol, who prefers the company of liberals, explains, "Finding a good housemate is hard enough without tossing adversarial personal politics into the brewing pot of possible lifestyle conflicts."

I WAS EXCITED TO FINALLY FIND A LIBERal poster who'd actually lived with a conservative, but that situation did not end well. Carrie, who emphasized the importance of being "political enough to generally give a shit about things" in her ad, laments, "I have in the past asked someone to leave the house because of a conflict which I believe came down to a lack of respect for women and a political superiority complex." Perhaps Carrie once roomed with Doug? Or this guy: "I am rather conservative and I prefer the house to be free of drugs, overly loud music, the smell of incense and skateboards."

THE EXPERIENCE OF THOSE IN A LARGE, bipartisan group home on Constitution Avenue reveals why red and blue cannot live together. Of the nine young people, three are Ivy-educated East Coast liberals, two are state-schooled Western conservatives, three are moderates, and one is British. The era of good feeling lasted less than two weeks. The roommates trace the breakdown to an argument over global warming. "It's really hard to argue with them," Thomas, one of the liberals, says of the conservatives. Now, "when we bring up pollution, it's mostly to see what their crazy views are, not to debate them." The cost of this ideological divide is more than awkward conversation—it's frozen toes. The conservatives live on the lower, warmer floors, and the liberals live in the colder rooms upstairs. At night, both camps sneak into the hall and fiddle with the thermostat. "[The conservatives] have fans in their rooms, but they turn off the heat instead of turning on the fan," Stuart, a liberal, says. "They care not for the welfare of the house."

THIS IS WHAT POLARIZATION HATH wrought. Sure, gerrymandering has turned congressional districts into safe little one-party bubbles, and that's bad for public policy and all that. But the real tragedy is what it's done to Adams Morgan. And, yet, there may be cause for hope. Jay, a nonprofit worker, recently advertised to fill the last slot in her house. Two of her housemates were looking for jobs on the Hill, and, when applicants found out, several offered to help put them in contact with the right people. "Some of them were just trying to help another young person out," Jay says. "But others were definitely trying to use their connections to sell themselves as roommates." Now that's what Washington is supposed to be about—shameless networking.

ELSPETH REEVE

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Iraq: Last Chance

A political settlement before any withdrawal

To concede that going to war in Iraq was a grave mistake of policy is not to embrace the conclusion that an immediate pullout — or one by a declared date moderated by conditions on the ground — would today serve U.S. interests. The country may have entered the war with erroneous notions of the state of Saddam's WMD programs. It may have underestimated the resilience of former Baathists and regime loyalists, their access to weapons, and the help they would get from foreign jihadists. It may have failed to anticipate that a society divided and oppressed by an authoritarian ruler might erupt into ethnic and religious conflict when that leader departs. It may have been naive in thinking that an externally modeled Iraqi democratic government would opt for secular rather than sectarian parliamentary representation and that its near-perfect transition would transform the region into a galaxy of democratic states. And it may have underestimated the number of troops needed to occupy a country of 25 million. Yet the answer is not to compound those mistakes by leaving in a way that makes large-scale civil war nearly inevitable, pushes the country into the lap of its Iranian neighbor, or advertises the United States as an unreliable friend, a hesitant hegemon, and a rewarder of those terrorists with the tenacity to outlast the behemoth. No, when a great power puts its leg in a snare, there must be some cure other than amputation.

—Robert Zelnick

The Scapegoats among Us

Blame-shifting after 9/11

To judge by current intellectual trends, many post-9/11 attempts to diagnose the American soul, both here and in Europe, have served less to clarify reality than to gravitate toward safer and more palatable substitutes. It is a fraught, fascinating spectacle worth exploring in detail — the more so because a parallel outpouring of books, especially from the contemporary European front, makes very clear what today's obvious displacements of political passion are really about.

—Mary Eberstadt

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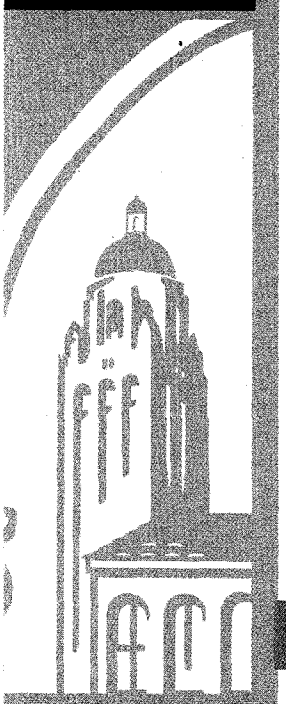

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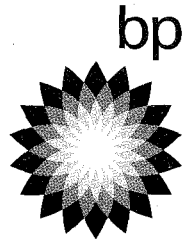
Energy.

Barrel, bushel, or both?

Oil Preparing for a better energy future means exploring a range of energy options. So we're investing $15 billion over ten years to find and produce new energy supplies in the Gulf. In fact, BP is the largest investor in U.S. energy development, investing $30 billion over the last five years.

Biofuels We're also thinking beyond the barrel, working with DuPont to create an advanced generation of biofuels made from corn, wheat and other crops. And we're creating the world's first integrated research center dedicated to applying biotechnology to the energy industry.
It's a start.



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